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Israeli police guard Orient House

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of Israeli police Tuesday took up positions guarding the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Jerusalem to prevent clashes with Jewish settlers who planned to protest the PLO's presence. Police rejected a request from settlers to stage a large-scale protest after two Israelis were shot to death in the occupied West Bank last week in an attack claimed by militants. Israel's supreme court upheld the right of police to limit the size of the demonstration to about 25 people. Target of the protest was the Orient House, seat of the PLO leaders who are drawing up plans for Palestinian self-rule once Israel withdraws from Jericho and the Gaza Strip under the Israel-PLO accord signed Sept. 13. Senior spokesman Shai Bazzak said the court decision was influenced by police intelligence that there was a possibility that Arabs would attack the settlers or that extremist Jews would try to damage the PLO building.

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King receives British MP

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received at the Royal Court member of the British House of Commons, Greville Janner who arrived in Amman Monday on a several-day visit to Jordan. King Hussein and the British parliamentarian discussed regional and international issues and the latest developments in the Middle East peace process.

Libya's exiled prince slams regime

AMMAN (R) — Libya's exiled crown prince said on Tuesday he believed the Tripoli government was behind the disappearance of former Libyan foreign minister Mansour Kikbia in Cairo two weeks ago. "Kikbia's disappearance in such a brutal way will certainly prod us to increase our solidarity to bring down the (Libyan) regime," Mohammad Al Hassan Al Rida Al Sanusi said in an interview. But Sanusi, a 31-year-old member of Libya's former ruling family who himself went into exile in 1988, said he had no proof.

PKK denies rumours of Ocalan killing

ANKARA (AFP) — The leader of the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, was rumoured here Tuesday to have been murdered in Syria, his country of residence, but a spokesman for the rebel leader dismissed the reports. Interior Minister Mahir Metin said in a telephone interview with state television that reports that Mr. Ocalan might have been killed or wounded had reached Ankara, but that it had not yet been possible to confirm the truth of them.

77,000 Jews went to Israel in 1993

TEL AVIV (AFP) — About 77,000 immigrants settled in Israel during 1993, almost the same number as the previous year, the Jewish Agency announced on Tuesday. Simcha Dinitz, head of the paragon government body, said 65,000 of the newcomers were from the former Soviet Union, where another 1.4 million Jews still live. Last year saw 76,500 arrivals. Mr. Dinitz predicted in a statement that another 500,000 Jews would arrive in Israel by the year 2000, "fulfilling the Zionist dream" of pushing the Israeli population beyond six million people. "Israel at the end of the present decade would become the largest concentration of Jews in the world," he said.

FIS to continue armed struggle

PARIS (AFP) — The underground leadership of Algerian Islamic fundamentalists called for continued armed struggle against the country's military-backed government in a communique received here Tuesday. The communique, dated Dec. 22, was signed by Abdul Razak Radjam, information chief of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Mr. Radjam has been in hiding in Algeria for the past two years. The communique appeared to be a response to government calls for Islamic leaders to take part in negotiations to resolve the crisis provoked by the cancellation of legislative elections that the FIS appeared set to win two years ago. Mr. Radjam called on "fighters to continue their jihad (holy war), for God has promised victory to the nation of the jihad and paradise for the martyrs of the jihad."

75 journalists died violent deaths in '93

BRUSSELS (R) — At least 75 journalists were killed while on assignment in 1993, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) said. Describing 1993 as "one of the bloodiest years on record," IFJ General Secretary Aidan White said in a statement that his organisation had recorded at least 75 confirmed cases of violent death, some in horrifying circumstances, of reporters, editors and broadcasters.

Self-rule talks inch ahead; no word on course

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) met for a second day Tuesday to try to break the deadlock on issues that have delayed an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank area of Jericho.

Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid told reporters there might be some word on progress later on Monday evening.

"We will stay here for as long as it takes," he said, emerging from the meetings in the upper floors of a Cairo hotel to buy cigarettes at the bar.

"We have pledged not to reveal a word, even half a word, about any progress, even half-progress," Mr. Sarid said.

But he added: "We are in the middle of negotiations and we must be patient enough to wait as long as the evening time. In the evening time we will be much better informed about our progress."

Asked whether the talks would continue, he said: "As long as necessary. As long as our staying here is worthwhile, we will stay."

"I don't want to create expectations, either too high or too low, because this is not helpful," he added. "Since everything is still cooking, I have not yet been able to taste it."

Egypt said there may be a breakthrough soon on Palestinian autonomy.

"We hope they will be able to inform us of their success at the end of the day," said Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

"We hope they will finish today, otherwise the two sides will continue the negotiations on Wednesday," Mr. Musa told a press conference.

New proposals had been presented by both sides, which may "enable the differences to be resolved," he said, following talks between his Israeli counterpart Shimon Peres and Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak.

The president was to meet the PLO delegation later Tuesday, on the second day of the latest round of autonomy negotiations.

Palestinian officials also refused to comment on the progress of the talks, which have reached an impasse over the boundaries for the Jericho district, security for Jewish settlements in Gaza and control of international crossing points.

Egyptian diplomats said that by warning the talks could still take "two weeks or two months" Mr. Peres sent the PLO a clear message before they resumed that Israel would not lose out if they proved fruitless.

Mr. Peres later praised Egypt, the only Arab state to have signed peace with Israel, for its mediation role.

"Egypt is not only the venue of the negotiations but it plays a role behind the scenes to facilitate the negotiations and narrow the differences between the two parties," he said.

Mr. Peres also hinted that control of border crossings was still a major stumbling block. "Our main concern is and will remain the security of Israel," he told reporters.

Mr. Peres and the chief Palestinian negotiator, Mahmoud Abbas, signed the breakthrough agreement in September, setting Dec. 13 as the deadline for Israel to start withdrawing from Gaza and Jericho and give limited self-rule to the Palestinians.

The essence of the dispute is that Israel fears the PLO is interpreting self-rule as the start of an independent Palestinian state.

Some PLO officials have begun to speak of the Israeli pullout from the overcrowded, poverty-stricken Gaza Strip and the Jericho area as a permanent withdrawal in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 242.

But the September accord says only that Israel agrees to withdraw as part of a five-year, interim period of self-rule during which the two sides will negotiate a permanent settlement under the "land for peace" formula in Resolution 242.

Mr. Musa visited the hotel where the negotiations were under way. He declined to speak to reporters and it was not clear whether he was going to see the Israelis or the Palestinians or both together.

A source close to the talks said Egypt was playing an increasingly active role as mediator to try to help the two sides resolve the historic peace agreement they signed only three months ago.

Another source said earlier Israel had made new concessions on the major issues but the Palestinians had not yet responded.

Accompanied by Mr. Sarid and deputy armed forces chief General Amnon Shahak, Mr. Peres met the PLO team led by Mr. Abbas.

The PLO team also included chief negotiator Nabil Shaath, economics department chief Ahmad Qouria and information department chief Yasser Abed Rabbo.

On Monday, the two sides met at the Egyptian foreign ministry.

Israeli radio said the Jewish state was ready to double the size of Jericho from 27 square kilometres to around 50 square kilometres.

However, the PLO is still demanding 200 square kilometres.

Israeli-PLO talks in Norway and France before the Cairo meeting also failed to break the deadlock on the start of autonomy.

Fariz appointed director of JTV

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday appointed Zeid Fariz as assistant director general of Radio and Television Corporation, and director of the Jordan Satellite Channel.



Palestinian boys throw stones at Israeli soldiers in Ramallah on Tuesday during a Fateh day (officially Jan. 1) demonstration (AFP photo)

Arafat said to expect Israeli withdrawal by mid-January

DUBAI (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat told Yemeni leaders he expects Israel to start withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and Jericho by mid-January, a Palestinian official said on Tuesday.

"He (Arafat) believes the Israeli withdrawal could start by mid-January and the implementation of the (Sept. 13) accord would start," the PLO's Yemeni envoy, Yahia Rabah, told Reuters by telephone.

He said Mr. Arafat, who arrived in Sanaa on Monday, briefed Yemeni leaders on the latest developments in the PLO-Israeli talks and the difficulties still to be resolving.

"The president (Arafat) hangs a lot of hope on the (Cairo) talks to resolve differences and exit from the deadlock to implement the agreement," said Mr. Rabah, describing Mr. Arafat's talks with Yemeni leaders.

Israel and the PLO continued talks in Cairo Tuesday aimed at resolving disputes delaying the Israeli withdrawal but a PLO negotiator there said the gap between the two sides remained.

Mr. Rabah said Mr. Arafat told Yemen's leaders he expects "these obstacles to be resolved in Cairo and that the implementation of the agreement will not be delayed by too long."

Mr. Arafat explained the differences between the PLO and Israel "but efforts are continuing" to resolve them, Mr. Rabah added.

PLO negotiator Yasser Abed-Rabbo told Reuters in Cairo, "we exchanged our views and we did not start negotiating any compromise. The main thing is that we feel that the gap is there."

The Israeli withdrawal which was due to start on Dec. 13 is being delayed by disputes over control of border crossings between Egypt and Gaza and between Jordan and the West Bank town of Jericho.

The two sides have yet to agree on the size of the Jericho area and security arrangements for Jewish settlements in Gaza.

Mr. Rabah said that Mr. Arafat stressed that control over border crossings was a

main Palestinian demand. "We (Palestinians) regard this issue to be of utmost importance," Mr. Rabah added.

Intensive private PLO-Israeli talks in Norway and France in the past few days have failed to break the deadlock and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres bluntly warned the PLO before heading to the Cairo talks not to expect any Israeli concessions.

"I hope very much that Arafat will climb down from his tree, because I am not bringing anything new," he told Yedioth Ahranoth newspaper.

The official Yemeni news agency SABA said Mr. Arafat held talks with President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Vice-

President Ali Salem Al Beedhi, who have been in dispute since August over political and economic reforms in the country, the north and south of which were united in May 1990.

SABA quoted Mr. Arafat as saying the talks focussed on the "need to safeguard Yemeni unity."

In September Mr. Arafat made an abortive attempt to reconcile the two Yemeni leaders.

Mr. Beedhi, a southerner, has said he will meet Mr. Saleh to resolve the crisis only if the president agrees to grant more regional autonomy.

(Continued on page 5)



A Palestinian boy is arrested after a stone-throwing protest in Ramallah on Tuesday (AFP photo)

Israeli planes and Hizbollah rockets in battle in S. Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli warplanes on Tuesday blasted bases of Hizbollah, which hit back with a shower of rockets, as Israel pinned the blame on Syria for the flare-up in southern Lebanon.

Israel launched seven raids on the Iqlim Al Tufah heights and the western part of the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley, both strongholds of Hizbollah guerrillas facing the Israeli-occupied "security zone."

At least three people were wounded in the air strikes on the heights, southeast of the port city of Sidon, according to police. But Hizbollah did not report any casualties in its ranks.

Israeli forces in the "security zone" meanwhile fought a day-long artillery duel with Hizbollah. Guerrillas focused their rocket attacks on Marjayoun, where the Israeli army is headquartered.

An Israeli army spokesman said earlier that the warplanes attacked "a training and departure base used for Hizbollah operations in the Jabal Safi region." All the planes returned safely to base.

Guerrillas fired 30 Katyusha rockets and heavy calibre shells at Marjayoun, where Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), also has its headquarters.

The rockets and shells blasted huge craters in the town's main street, punctured a water main and damaged power lines.

Panic-stricken residents sought shelter in basements. The Islamic Resistance Movement, the armed wing of Hizbollah, claimed responsibility for mortar attacks on SLA positions in Hula and Tallet Al Abbas, on the border with Israel.

Katyushas also crashed into Aishiyeh in the central sector of the zone and Sojod on the edge of the buffer strip.

Witnesses said they saw dust and smoke shrouding the stricken targets after the first two assaults.

Newsmen and photographers who tried to reach Miita and Loweizeh were turned back by Hizbollah guerrillas, totting AK-47 assault rifles and shoulder-fired rocket-propelled grenades.

Hizbollah claimed responsibility for the Katyusha attacks but made no mention of the casualties.

"It is our undisputed right to use whatever weapons we deem necessary to fight the occupier of our land," said Sheikh Nabil Kawook, Hizbollah's spokesman.

Israeli and SLA gunners targeted the villages of Baraasbeet, Majdel Slim and Shaqra on the outskirts of the zone.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin bled Syria, which has 35,000 troops in Lebanon, responsible for the latest fighting.

"The Syrians can reduce terrorist activity in southern Lebanon if they want, and they can do much to restore calm, but they don't," Mr. Rabin told reporters on a tour of the "security zone."

Mr. Rabin repeated Israel's conditional proposal to pull out of South Lebanon after a six-month period in which no attacks are made on its "security zone."

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Iraq, U.N. to discuss embargo next month

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi and U.N. officials are to meet in New York in mid-January for talks on the embargo in force against Iraq since 1990, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Tuesday.

"The Iraqi negotiators will have several meetings in New York" with the U.N. commission in charge of disarming post-war Iraq, Mr. Aziz said, quoted in Baghdad newspapers.

He did not specify who would lead the delegations, but said they would discuss "the possibility of lifting the embargo" imposed on Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Mr. Aziz informed the United Nations on Nov. 17 that Baghdad accepted long-term monitoring of its arms programmes, under the terms of the ceasefire to the 1991 Gulf war which drove Iraqi troops out of the emirate.

Rolf Ekeus, head of the disarmament commission, said Iraqi demands for an end to the embargo would have to wait for implementation of long-term monitoring, and proposed a six-month trial period.

The U.N. Security Council is due next month to review the embargo, which is extended every 60 days. The United States has led opposition to a lifting of the sanctions.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said in a Christmas and New Year message that an end was in sight to the crippling embargo. "The worst is over

and the rest is within your grasp," he told the Iraqi people on Friday.

Kuwait has insisted Iraq also formally recognise a U.N.-designated border between the two countries and release Kuwaiti prisoners-of-war. Baghdad has denied holding prisoners but agreed to evacuate its civilians from the border area.

Meanwhile, Iraq has stepped up its search for oil and gas in a bid to increase future supplies, Iraqi Oil Minister Safi Hadi Jawad said Monday.

He said 1,300 engineers and experts had already started explorations and several bores had been sunk with "remarkable results despite the lack of necessary material because of the embargo," according to the official agency Iraqi News Agency.

Six teams of seismologists have been charged with studying the southern regions of Basrah and Misan, Wasit and Dhi Qar in the east, Anbar in the west and Salahuddin and Nineveh in the north.

Studies will also be carried out in the southeastern and western desert areas.

Iraq has huge oil reserves, second only to Saudi Arabia, which Baghdad estimated at 100 billion barrels in May.

Before its invasion of Kuwait, Iraq produced 3.14 million barrels a day.

In May it announced that it wanted to double its production capacity by 2000 to up to 6.5 million barrels a day.

Russian Communists challenge Yeltsin's charter

MOSCOW (R) — A Communist Party deputy to the new Russian parliament accused authorities Tuesday of rigging the ballot in this month's referendum on President Boris Yeltsin's constitution.

Signalling a renewed battle over Mr. Yeltsin's national charter when the new parliament opens next month, the deputy, Viktor Ilyukhin, said his party would fight to get it redrawn.

Mr. Yeltsin's camp has declared victory in the Dec. 12 people's vote on a post-Soviet draft constitution that will give the president sweeping powers over the new legislature.

But Mr. Ilyukhin, a colourful, fast-talking lawyer elected to the State Duma (lower house) in parliamentary polls held on the same day, said there was evidence of distortion in the numbers said to have voted for the new charter — a document on which Mr. Yeltsin had staked his personal reputation.

"There were forgeries in the number of voters, evidence of distortions. There is a huge inconsistency in the overall number of the registered voters," he told a news conference.

Mr. Ilyukhin was clearly referring to inconsistencies in the count arising from the number of invalid ballot papers cast in the poll across the vast Russian Federation.

The referendum on the draft constitution was decided by a straight majority of those who turned out — as opposed to a majority of the electorate. The only pre-condition was that at least 50 per cent of the electorate took part in the process.

Results issued by the central electoral commission showed overall turnout was 55.55 per cent of eligible voters and the "yes" vote was 57.44 per cent.

"We can't accept a document which has been passed by less than one third of the vote. Two-thirds of the voters either did not vote or voted against it," Mr. Ilyukhin said.

The Communist Party will be the third largest single party in the Duma with about 50 seats. It lies behind the extreme nationalist Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) or Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and the main pro-reform bloc, Russia's Choice.

The communist electoral campaign was built round attacks on the constitution, describing it as a "bonapartist" charter that would hand Mr. Yeltsin dictatorial powers.

But he was scathing about Russia's Choice, headed by radical economic chief Yegor Gaidar, dismissing it as a party which represented "only executive power based on corporate interest," which was doomed to split.

He said his party was still waiting to hear from the government of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin about its economic programme and "proposals on how to pull the country out of crisis."

But he made clear he violently opposed Mr. Yeltsin's determination to keep Mr. Gaidar, architect of most of the sweeping economic reforms, in office. "Our attitude towards the pseudo-reforms, in office," "Our attitude towards that pseudo-reformer has not changed," he said.

Mr. Zyuganov had surprisingly warm words for Mr. Zhirinovskiy's LDP party, saying it had "talented managers, very clever journalists and highly-qualified lawyers."

Mr. Ilyukhin earned a reputation for controversy during the Kremlin rule of Mikhail Gorbachev when he opened a law suit against the then Soviet president for allowing the break-up of the Soviet Union.

He was immediately sacked from his job in the Soviet prosecutor's office.

Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov, speaking at the same news conference, would not be drawn on which political partners his party would team up within the new parliament, saying it would cooperate with all constructive forces.

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Saudi Shura council meets today

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's appointed Shura (consultative) council will convene Wednesday, official Saudi sources in Riyadh said on Tuesday.

One told Reuters by telephone the all-male 60-member council will take the oath of office after which King Fahd will attend the council's first meeting on Wednesday.

It is the first representative assembly in almost 60 years to give ordinary Saudi citizens a say in the affairs of the oil-rich kingdom.

The council was appointed in August as part of political reforms promised by the conservative kingdom more than 21 years ago.

Diplomats say the deployment of hundreds of thousands of American and other non-Muslim soldiers in Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest shrines, after Iraq occupied Kuwait ended Riyadh's isolation and accelerated the reforms.

The king appointed the Shura in August, a month later he named members of regional assemblies, carrying out reforms in the conservative kingdom first promised some 21 years ago.

The representatives are not direct descendants of King Fahd's father, the late King Abdul Aziz who created Saudi Arabia in 1932.

Senior members of the Saudi royal family traditionally control the kingdom's administration and its vast oil wealth, huge foreign assets and military and internal security forces.

Diplomats say the regional assemblies are expected to meet after the Shura, which will hold its first session in a specially built building in Riyadh.

A royal decree calling for the Shura to convene has not been issued but journalists in

Riyadh said they had been invited to a reception on Tuesday night to mark the Shura's first session, expected to convene the following day.

Diplomats say Saudi Arabia's Western allies are glad to see Riyadh take steps towards implementing reforms after years of isolation.

U.S. President Bill Clinton sent the king a letter in August welcoming the move "as an important step to widen popular participation in the government, which conforms with your history and traditions."

Diplomats in the kingdom say some of the rules governing the Shura fall short of Western concepts of democracy, but they say forming it represents a big move forward.

"It is an important first step and the thing to do is to focus on this progressive move," said one. "Every country has its own version of democracy and no one has the 'perfect' formula."

Diplomats say Shura and regional assembly members will represent the different sectors of Saudi society and the appointments were well received by the people.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, has a population of about 17 million, including some four million expatriate workers.

The Shura, which will not hold public sessions, includes five members of the religious establishment, 30 holders of doctorates, members of large tribes, representatives from the Muslim Shiite minority, active and retired military officers and senior government officials.

Kuwait, where women are not allowed to vote, is the only Gulf Arab state with an elected parliament. The opposition dominates the assembly. Its neighbours have consultative councils.

Jewish connection for Zhirinovsky, official says

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Ultra-nationalist Russian leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky was a militant in Soviet liberal Jewish circles before the collapse of the Soviet Union and had asked for an invitation to go to Israel, a top official in the Jewish Agency said Monday.

Baruch Gur, who was a member of the Israeli diplomatic mission in Moscow, told AFP: "In 1989 Vladimir Zhirinovsky was active in the Jewish organisation Shalom which grouped Jews of different backgrounds communists and refuseniks."

"At the time he said his father Wolf Zhirinovsky was a Jew, which was very plausible," said Mr. Gur whose agency is a para-governmental body in charge of welcoming immigrants.

Mr. Gur said the head of Russia's far-right Liberal Democratic Party had asked the Israeli authorities in 1983 to send him a fictitious invitation from relatives in Israel so that he could leave the Soviet Union.

"The request said that his father was a Jew," Mr. Gur added.

More than one and a half million Soviet citizens of Jewish origin or claiming to be made similar requests to get out of the Soviet Union, he said.

In an interview on Israeli Television a year ago, Mr. Zhirinovsky, whose party came second in Russian parliamentary elections on Dec. 12, denied that his father who died in 1946 was a Jew.

Mr. Zhirinovsky has been accused of being a vehement anti-Semite, a charge he has denied.

Israel's foreign ministry issued invitations to potential

immigrants as a way around a Soviet policy that permitted Jews to leave only for "family reunification."

Deborah Lipson, spokeswoman for the Soviet Zionist Forum, an immigrants' group, said Mr. Zhirinovsky was sent an invitation in late 1983. She said his father was named "Wolf" — a common Jewish name in Russia — and former associates said Mr. Zhirinovsky told them his father was Jewish.

That may have been enough to have justified an invitation, Mr. Zhirinovsky himself vehemently denied his father was Jewish to the associated press in Moscow.

"Never, never," he said. "My mother is Russian, my father is Russian, my wife is Russian, my son is Russian. Only Russian, all (my) family is Russian."

In the 1970s and 1980s, Israel received names of Jews interested in immigrating by letters smuggled or mailed from the Soviet Union. The government would then send out an invitation in the name of an Israeli with a similar last name to meet the reunification criterion, officials said.

Soviet emigration was only liberalised in July 1992.

Since 1989, nearly 473,000 people immigrated to the Jewish state from the former Soviet Union. Between 1967 and 1989, about 250,000 Soviet Jews emigrated.

The foreign ministry had no immediate comment when asked if any records were kept about potential applicants, such as Mr. Zhirinovsky.

Six years after expressing an interest in emigrating, Mr. Zhirinovsky also was part of an effort to create Shalom, an umbrella group of

Jewish organisations.

Mr. Zhirinovsky was present and spoke at Shalom's founding meeting in 1989 in Moscow, Mr. Gur said.

Yuli Koshorovsky, vice president of the Zionist forum and former refusenik, said Jewish activists in Moscow told him Mr. Zhirinovsky gave a "very aggressive" speech.

"He said we (the Jews) had to be independent and not too reliant on the authorities... in other words, an activist approach," Mr. Koshorovsky said, quoting activists he met with while visiting Moscow last week.

Australian Jews upset

Australian Jewish leaders on Tuesday demanded the government block an expected visit by Mr. Zhirinovsky.

A government spokesman said a member of Mr. Zhirinovsky's staff had sought a visa application form for him for a private trip to Sydney to visit relatives in early January. The spokesman said the application had not yet been returned.

Officials earlier said they believed there would be no problem granting the visa. Mr. Zhirinovsky has a niece in Sydney.

But Jewish leaders said denying entry to Mr. Zhirinovsky would make it clear Australia did not endorse his views.

"Here is a man who is a self-confessed anti-Semite and a fascist and who has threatened the world with a nuclear holocaust," Mark Leibler, president of the Zionist Federation of Australia, told the Sydney Morning Herald.

"The best way to deal with someone holding his views is to let him say it outside Australia."

Aspin opposes leniency for Pollard

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Outgoing Defence Secretary Les Aspin has advised President Bill Clinton in a letter not to show leniency to convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, the New York Times said Tuesday.

Mr. Aspin, who announced his resignation Dec. 15, said that Mr. Pollard had revealed state secrets in letters he wrote from jail since he was convicted of spying for Israel in 1985 and sentenced to life in prison.

According to the newspaper, Mr. Aspin opposed leniency for the former intelligence analyst on three grounds: It would undermine efforts to protect classified data his disclosures did grave damage to U.S. security and he had committed important secrets to memory.

A lawyer for Pollard told the newspaper neither he nor his client had ever been told the letters violated national security, adding the charges violated Mr. Pollard's constitutional right to face his accusers.

"Since July 1989, he has included classified information to 14 of his letters... he clearly remembers classified information which he still has the ability to compromise," Mr. Aspin said in his letter dated Dec. 23.

Mr. Pollard, who worked for navy intelligence in the mid 1980s, will be eligible for parole in 1995 after a decade behind bars. The Israeli government and Jewish groups have deemed Mr. Pollard's punishment too harsh and pressed Mr. Clinton for clemency.

State Department officials have also recommended that Mr. Pollard's sentence be reduced to help Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's peace efforts peace with the Palestinians.

Mr. Aspin, siding with military and intelligence officials who consider Mr. Pollard's breach of security too damaging to merit any leniency, told Mr. Clinton that Mr. Pollard would likely emigrate to Israel if released.

"Especially, if he leaves the country, Mr. Pollard would continue to present a risk of further damage to the nation," Mr. Aspin said.

Mr. Aspin also warned that Mr. Pollard's release would send the wrong message to would-be spies and might undermine Mr. Clinton's ability "to control and manage national security concerns."



ROBBERY: A plainclothes policeman picks up jewelry left in the showcase of a gold shop gunmen burst into the store and opened fire, killing the owner and his brother and a client late Monday in the north Cairo suburb of Matariyah (AFP photo)

After more than a decade, ancient mummies being brought out again in Cairo

By Mimi Mann
The Associated Press

CAIRO — Egypt's royal mummies were once barred from public view to prevent tourists from ogling a national treasure. Now they're being put back on display to lure tourists frightened away by extremist attacks.

Antiquities officials said a select group of 11 pharaohs and queens, including famed Ramses II, could go on display as early as February inside a refurbished mummy room in Cairo's Egyptian museum.

The hope is that the mummies, among Egypt's greatest treasures, will again play a role as one of Egypt's top tourist draws, now that attacks by militants have badly hurt the vital tourism industry.

"Having the mummies is a dream for history," said the museum's mummy expert, Nasy Iskander, who has worked with the remains of ancient royalty for 20 years.

The royal mummies were last seen by the public in 1980, after a visit by Egypt's then-president, Anwar Sadat. He made an offhand remark that he did not think once-great kings should be treated as tourist come-ons.

"I can't accept exposing the

remains of Egypt's pharaohs in exhibitions for people to view," Mr. Sadat said. "This is against the commandments of the three religions — Islam, Christianity and Judaism."

Antiquities officials sealed the mummy room.

But in recent years, tourism has dropped off sharply because of anxiety over sporadic violence between extremists and police. The extremists want to replace Egypt's secular government with Islamic rule.

Tourists have been also been targeted to cut off the government's single major source of income. On Monday, militants threw bombs at a tour bus and wounded 16 people, half of them visitors from Austria.

Largely because of the extremists' success in reducing tourism, the mummies are again being displayed, in hopes they will prove a powerful tourist draw.

"Year after year, it's the mummies tourists ask for," Mr. Iskander said.

Mohammad Salah, director of the Egyptian museum, said the mummies will be shown every respect when they go on display. Each has a specially designed case that takes into account the specific needs of the mummy, Egypt's climate

and conditions that existed inside the original tomb.

Before, mummies were displayed under bright lights. Now, subtle lighting will highlight only faces, hands and toes.

"Nobody thinks of the mummies as bodies and skins," Mr. Salah said. "These are great personalities who played a great role in Egyptian history. They will be shown with the dignity they deserve for their place in history."

Mr. Iskander said visitors are enchanted when they face the mummies: "It's like when you meet a famous person, and you say, 'hey, aren't you so and so? I know you.'"

Egypt's royal mummies collection comprises 27 remains found in two caches late last century in southern Egypt. Ancient priests, fearing for the mummies' safety, took them from their tombs, rewrapped them and hid them in two secret locations within royal burial grounds across the Nile from the ancient capital Thebes, now Luxor.

Twenty date from the New Kingdom, a renaissance of Egyptian might that began in 1550 B.C., the era when mummification techniques reached a peak.

Mr. Iskander made the diffi-

cult choice of which mummies should go on display first. He knew the collection must include Pharaoh Seti I and his son Ramses II because of their greatness. Also, Seti's mummy reveals the warrior-king had six toes on each foot.

Amenophis I is included because he is the only mummy with original wrappings. Tutankhamun is there because his opened head and nose help visitors understand the steps in mummification. Ramses V's mummy shows smallpox scars.

Two favourites are sure to be the mummies of Pharaoh Sesostris II, who ruled Egypt more than 3,500 years ago, and Queen Henttowi, who lived between 1070-945 B.C.

Segeneire is said to have died fighting the invading Hyksos. His mummy supports the legend. The skull is cracked with battle wounds. The right hand is frozen in a clenched fist, the mouth stilled in an agonising scream.

Henttowi's mummy, Mr. Iskander's favourite, has a lovely plaited wig but was mutilated by embalmers trying to improve mummification techniques. It took Iskander almost a year to return her mummy to good health and good looks.

Rabin wants Geneva summit to change things

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is looking for next month's U.S.-Syrian summit meeting in Geneva to yield changes that he says are needed to improve the environment for Middle East peace talks.

In an interview Friday, Mr. Rabin outlined three areas where he would like the U.S. to press Damascus. First, he wants Syria to spell out the details of the kind of peace it is ready to offer Israel. Second, he wants Syria to loosen its grip on Lebanon so that nation can deploy its army to maintain order and control radical groups that attack Israel. Finally, Mr. Rabin wants Syrian President Hafez Al Assad

to put a lid on the radical Palestinian groups whose leaders reside in Damascus.

Mr. Rabin also maintained a tough stance on current negotiations with Palestinians over implementing an agreement under which Israel would turn over governance of the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho. But he appeared willing to offer an inducement to speeding up the process, saying that if differences are resolved, Israel could complete its pullout from those areas in three months, rather than the four months called for in the Sept. 13 accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rabin isn't

being any more forthcoming than Mr. Assad. For months, Syria has said it won't describe the extent of the peace it will offer until Israel agrees to leave the Golan Heights, which it occupied in 1967; Israel is waiting for Syria to make the first move before it provides details about its promised withdrawal.

During the interview, the cautious Mr. Rabin said, "I was the first prime minister of Israel that said I'm ready for a withdrawal of Israeli armed forces on the Golan Heights." But he added: "What I will not negotiate is the geographic dimensions before I know for what kind of peace." — The Wall Street Journal.

Power of Islam grows in secular Turkey

By Daniel J. Wakin
The Associated Press

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Bumper stickers proclaim "Power belongs to God."

The power of Islam is growing in Turkey, a predominantly Muslim but constitutionally secular nation of 60 million people. As it does, the division widens between religious activists and people dedicated to secularism.

Radical Islam is not considered likely to dominate the country, as in neighbouring Iran, by its anti-Western message conflicts with Turkey's position as a NATO member and aspirant to the European Community. Enforcement of sanctions on Iraq and the protection of Kurds in northern

Iraq depend on Turkey's cooperation.

"The ground is fertile for polarisation," said Cengiz Candar, a columnist for the Istanbul daily Sabah. "There is a feeling of revolt in the conscience of the people. We feel our Muslim identity much more strongly."

Some see the Islamic revival as a belated reaction against how the modern republic was founded 71 years ago by Mustafa Kemal, later named Ataturk.

He ruthlessly sought to rid Turkey of its Ottoman and religious past, using Western-oriented secular nationalism to unite it. He closed religious schools and a few mosques, turning them into museums;

banned the public wearing of religious garb and changed to the Roman alphabet from the Arabic, the language of The Koran.

Nowadays, mainstream politicians take care to be observed going to mosques and the U.S.-educated female premier, Tansu Ciller, says, "Thank God I am a Muslim."

The circulations of Islamic newspapers are increasing. Although no statistics are available, analysts say Turks are becoming more observant. Women in ankle-length black robes, showing only a small triangle of face are common in some quarters of Istanbul, a city of 11 million.

The fundamentalist Welfare Party, a well-organised group led by Necmettin Erbakan,

won 40 seats in the 450-member parliament in 1991 and captured six Istanbul districts in local elections a year ago. It is expected to do well in nationwide local elections in March.

Mr. Erbakan claims his followers have doubled in number to 1.6 million over two years. He draws support from those who are dissatisfied with corruption and from the masses of rural migrants to the cities, many of whom find refuge from unemployment and poverty in the promises of religion.

"Islam will make a revolution in civilisation," said one Welfare Party supporter, Firat Oruc, a 19-year-old sociology student at Istanbul University.

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

07:30	Only
18:00	Sports N.B.A.
19:00	News in French
19:15	Le Journal De L'Histoire
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Ten Close for Comfort
21:10	Documentary
22:00	News in English
22:30	Film "Till Murder Do Us Part"

PRAYER TIMES

05:07	Fajr
16:30	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
16:37	Dhuhr
14:21	'Asr
16:44	Maghrib
18:07	'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740	Min/Max. temp. 6 / 17
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	Aqaba 13 / 23
St. Joseph Church Tel. 623491	Deserts 5 / 19
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 632440	

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 631851. Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751
Amman International Church Tel. 652576
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 641195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 675691
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Clouds will appear at different altitudes and winds will be southeasterly moderate and seas calm.

Jordan Valley

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19, Aqaba 23. Humidity readings: Amman 38 per cent. Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Dr. Ahmad Othman	786394
Dr. Adnan Zaghlool	898140
Dr. Ghaleb Zaidieh	734011
Dr. Yousef Abdo	649916
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	778336
Al Asana pharmacy	678055
Nairooh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	626791
Yacoub pharmacy	649495
Shimoon pharmacy	677661
Nairooh pharmacy	623672
Najih pharmacy	847632
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Reprints	641101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	662101
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	681101
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200

ZARQA:	
Dr. Issa Al Omari	90126
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	641111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630441
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	773121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	894391
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	641176
Water and Sewerage	

Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Reprints	641101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	662101
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	681101
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khaldun Maternity, J. Amn	642816
Al-Khaldun Maternity, J. Amn	642412
Jahel Amman Maternity	642342
Malhas, J. Amman	646140
Palestine, Shmehani	646174
Shmehani Hospital	646131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital	667279
The Islamic, Abdali	646127/27
Al-Ahli, Abdali	646166
Jullian, Al-Mohajreh	771111/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	773111/2
Army, IMarka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	612340/31
Amal Hospital	674155

ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)943323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)905641
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)999990

IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital	(02)347100

AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khaldun Maternity, J. Amn	642816
Al-Khaldun Maternity, J. Amn	642412
Jahel Amman Maternity	642342
Malhas, J. Amman	646140
Palestine, Shmehani	646174
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Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital	(02)347100

AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:00	Aqaba (RJ)
08:30	Jeddah (RJ)
08:55	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:15	Larnaca (RJ)
09:30	London (RJ)
09:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:00	London (RJ)
10:15	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
10:30	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
10:45	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
10:55	Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
11:05	Rome (RJ)
11:20	Rome (RJ)
11:35	Aqaba (RJ)
11:50	Beirut (ME)
12:05	Cairo (MS)
12:20	Sana'a (YV)
12:35	Jeddah (SU)
12:50	Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:05	Jeddah (SA)
13:20	Sana'a (YV)
13:35	Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:50	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (AF)
14:05	Paris, Damascus (AF)
14:20	Beirut (ME)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:05	Rome (A2)
05:20	Cairo (MS)
05:35	Jeddah (SU)
05:50	Abu Dhabi (GF)
06:05	Sana'a (YV)
06:20	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (AF)
06:35	Paris, Damascus (AF)
06:50	Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30	Aqaba (RJ)
06:00	Rome (RJ)
06:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
06:30	Berlin, London (RJ)
06:45	Rome (RJ)
07:00	Istanbul (RJ)
07:15	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
07:30	Colombo (RJ)
07:45	Cairo (RJ)
08:00	Riyadh (RJ)
08:15	New Delhi (RJ)
08:30	Aden (RJ)
08:45	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
09:00	Sana'a (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:05	Beirut, Paris (AF)
05:20	Rome (A2)
05:35	Beirut (ME)
05:50	Cairo (MS)
06:05	Sana'a (YV)
06:20	Jeddah (SU)
06:35	Abu Dhabi (GF)
06:50	Sana'a (YV)
07:05	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (AF)
07:20	Paris, Damascus (AF)
07:35	Beirut (ME)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus

Arr. Amman

Dep. Damascus

Arr. Amman

Dep. Damascus

Arr. Amman

Dep. Damascus

Arr. Amman

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Arr. Amman

Dep. Damascus

Arr. Amman

مركز الصحافة

Senate debates draft law on teachers' union

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Upper House of Parliament, Tuesday studied a draft law on the creation of a teachers' union now that the Lower House has approved it after the introduction of a number of amendments.

Meeting under the chairmanship of Ahmad Al Lawzi and in the presence of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and Cabinet members, the Senate heard the views of several members, as well as Justice Minister Taher Hikmat.

Senator Ahmad Tarawneh, said that the draft law should be referred to the House's Judiciary Committee first, while Thougani Hindawi said that the draft law should be referred to the educational committee as well.

Mudar Badran noted, that the Senate should not discuss the draft law in detail before it is scrutinised by the Higher Council for the interpretation of the Law because the council had earlier described the union's project as non-constitutional, requiring the approval of six members of the council. The justice minister said that the council has to discuss the concept of the draft law.

At the end of the discussion the House opted to refer the issue to the Senate's Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Tarawneh was appointed head of the Judiciary Committee while Marwan Humoud was elected rapporteur of the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee.

Other topics discussed by the Senate included an education law of 1988, which will be referred to the Lower House to approve amendments to the law.



CROWN PRINCE IN IRBID: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday toured the Irbid Governorate and met with members of the governorate's executive and consultative councils. The Prince also laid the foundation stone for the Irbid Governorate city hall, the northern Jordan

Valley District building and Princess Bader's training hospital. Prince Hassan was accompanied on his tour by Interior Minister Salameh Hamad, Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas and Public Works and Housing Minister Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat.

World Bank official satisfied with Jordan's implementation of reform

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Bank is satisfied with Jordan's economic performance over the past two years, when Jordan faced serious issues as a result of the Gulf crisis and the war's negative impact on the Kingdom, according to Mr. Ram Chopra, the World Bank's administrative director for the Near East and North Africa.

He said he had conveyed this message to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali in the course of discussing relations between the World Bank and the Jordanian government.

Describing the meeting as fruitful and the relations as extremely good, Mr. Chopra said it is hoped that cooperation would continue.

He said that Jordan had been showing good performance in implementing the economic reform programme, despite the fact that the Kingdom

faced a flood of refugees from the Gulf region since the start of the Gulf crisis, especially the Jordanian expatriates, forcing the government to find jobs and increase funds to provide immediate aid to the returnees.

He stressed that Jordan has succeeded in 1992 to attain an excellent economic growth, especially in the construction field, while foreign trade tremendously improved, largely due to Jordan's active role in the Middle East peace process.

He said that Jordan was very brave in dealing with the numerous issues that have faced the country.

Mr. Chopra added that the government deserves praise for its performance and for efforts to inform its public administration system, because its performance in this respect helped cutting down on bureaucracy. The World Bank is reas-

sured of the government's drive to retain good contacts and cooperate with the World Bank, said Mr. Chopra.

Referring to the peace process, Mr. Chopra stressed that Jordan would be facing other problems as a result of peace in the region, while being committed to aiding the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The World Bank official said Jordan has been playing a significant role, through its people's skill, to contribute to the regional development.

Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz attended the meeting. Earlier Tuesday, the prime minister briefed the Cabinet on the outcome of the one-day visit by Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa to Jordan. He said that the visit was dedicated to discussing the latest Syrian-Jordanian coordination in the peace process.

Germany offers JD 9.5 m debt relief

By Suhair Obeidat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Germany is writing off DM 20 million (JD 9.5 million) of Jordan's debts bringing the total of debt relief Bonn extended to Amman this year to DM 29.5 million (JD 13.5 million), a senior German diplomat said Tuesday.

Matthias Meyer, counsellor at the German embassy, said that the offer, presented to the Jordanian government Monday, stipulates that 50 per cent of the amount to be written off should be spent in Jordanian dinars on environmental projects to be suggested by Jordan.

This is the second write-off this year. In October, Germany decided to relieve Jordan of DM 9.5 million (JD 4 million). This brings down Jordan's debt to Germany to DM 492.5 million (JD 213 million). "The total debt was DM 523 million (JD 234 million)," he said.

Mr. Meyer said that a debt rescheduling agreement,

covering July 1993 to February 1994 was recently accepted by both sides and could be signed very early 1994 in Bonn by the German minister of finance and Jordan's ambassador there.

"This arrangement brings the total of rescheduled debts to DM 86 million (JD 41 million)," he said.

Mr. Meyer said that Jordan "has always been in the focus of our interest and is one of the largest recipients of German aid," stressing that Jordan "will not lose money to the interest of Palestinians, (rather) we want to strengthen Jordan's importance in the whole process."

He said that Germany is currently conducting negotiations with both Jordan and the Palestinians to "see what we can do together, because the Palestinians have to be helped in the beginning by all Arabs and Jordan has good institutions in all the areas we are dealing with."

He expressed hope that

there would be more Jordanian involvement in the West Bank on the non-political side. "We don't want to make it political, but regarding environmental issues, we would like to establish an environmental authority in the West Bank to be arranged in cooperation with experts from Jordan and we could finance the training the people."

In the absence of proper institutions (on the Palestinian side) to carry out the suggested projects, "there should be close cooperation between Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis and donor countries," he said.

He said that Germany will continue to channel its aid to the Palestinians through Jordanian institutions. Current aid to Palestinian farmers in the West Bank is funnelled through the Amman Cairo Bank "and once branches of Jordanian banks are opened there, we will do it through them," he said.

German projects in the West

Bank include sewage systems in Bethlehem, support for the Cooperation Union in Nablus (which gives credit to small farmers), water treatment in Al Beereh and improvement of the water distribution in Ramat.

"We recently got a licence to drill a well in Nablus and are planning a cleaning project in Gaza, by, for example, providing garbage trucks and finding a suitable dumping place," he said.

Mr. Meyer described the visit by Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat to Bonn earlier this month as "very successful. The German people were impressed with Arafat and the general mood towards him was open-minded."

He said that two prominent parliamentarians from the Christian Democratic Party (the ruling party) will visit Jordan in January to "study the economic and political situation in Jordan and discuss the possibilities of future economic projects between the Palestinians, Jordan and Germany."

Jordan holds off reopening banks branches in W. Bank

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is holding off giving the green signal to commercial banks to reopen their branches in the occupied West Bank in response to a request for a delay from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), officials and banking sources said Tuesday.

They said the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) recently told the banks to await further instructions after informing them earlier this month to prepare the groundwork for reopening the branches, closed after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

The PLO argument behind the request for a delay, according to the sources, was that the organisation's leadership was too preoccupied with thrashing out differences with Israel in the implementation of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord to review a draft economic accord with Jordan.

"Once the pressure goes down, Chairman (Yasser) Arafat could seriously look at the draft and move forward in ratifying it," said a Palestinian source.

At the same time, Jordan is also apprehensive that if a vacuum is left in the occupied territories, with no Arab monetary authority and banks, Israeli banks might try to exploit it at the expense of the Kingdom. One fourth to one third of Jordan's currency is in circulation among the

two million Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The request for the delay was conveyed to Jordan by the Palestinian ambassador in Amman, Al Tayeb Abdul Rahim.

Sources described as very cordial a meeting between Deputy Prime Minister Maan Abu Nowar and Mr. Abdul Rahim on Dec. 20 when the issue was discussed.

CBJ Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi told Parliament members Monday that the government had not formally endorsed an agreement reached with Israel on reopening the branches.

Dr. Nabulsi refrained from commenting on the political dimensions of the issue and limited his comments to the technical, monetary aspects and policies.

The CBJ is planning to allow all the closed branches to reopen rather than initially allowing one branch of each of the seven or eight banks which used to operate in the West Bank.

The Jordan-Israeli accord provides for CBJ control and supervision of the banks according to Jordanian laws and regulations.

The extent of Israeli role will be limited to granting an approval for licence applications which already have CBJ endorsement; the banks will be required to send periodic reports to the Bank of Israel.

Dr. Nabulsi has said that there is no linkage between the draft economic agreement between Jordan and the PLO and the reopening of the banks.

Negotiations between Jordan and Israel on reopening the banks began more than one year ago, much before Israel and the PLO worked out their secret Oslo accord which led to the Sept. 13 Declaration of Principles, officials say.

At the same time, analysts note that a Jordan move to reopen the banks, in line with the agreement with Israel while the Jordan-PLO draft accord remains unratified, might have negative effects on political coordination between Jordan and the organisation in the context of the peace process.

Palestinian economic planners in the occupied West Bank say that once the self-rule arrangement takes effect as and when Israel and the PLO settle their differences in the implementation of the Sept. 13 accord, Jordan will have to negotiate a separate banking agreement with the self-rule authority.

There was no explanation why the Kingdom will have to have a separate agreement since the draft economic accord with the PLO provides for CBJ control of the monetary and banking affairs in the occupied territories in coordination with the Palestinians.

No official was immediately available for comment.

Activist's paintings preach return to nature

By Ica-Wabbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Hani Hourani, a man with political ideals for which he once fought, thinks, in a world of changing values and political upheavals, that after all has been said and done the best thing is to return to nature, to the pure, unadulterated values of life.

So his water-colours, attesting to a great talent and mastery of the brush, render simple messages, "not charged with political meaning, as most would expect" of nature and peaceful villages with an idyllic life, unperturbed since Biblical times.

The villages, whether in the north, Spera, in Salt or in Syria, Algeria or Vietnam, faithfully reproduce the life of people untouched by modern civilisation, with houses basking in the sun or sheltered by the shadow of trees, with patches of wheat or fruit trees strewn among them and with the feeling of life come to a standstill.

Colours are calm, soothing, local characteristics are preserved, the viewer integrates in the village life, walks the dirt roads between the houses, rests in the fields or moves busily among the industrious Vietnamese.

In the group of Wadi Al Wallah landscapes, a clear

blue stream meanders around boulders whitened by the sun, shadowed by timid, slender reed stems or guarded on either side by red and pink oleanders.

Blue skies hang over an almost barren land with, here and there, a daring tree pushing its roots deep in the stone in the desire to survive, or patches of lush green vegetation by the water rejoicing the eye, offering it a fresh distraction from the arid surroundings.

Petra, one of Jordan's landmarks, is pictorially represented, the dark, narrow opening of the siq inviting to adventure and discovery.

A still life and two expressive portraits, of the artist's father and of a young woman, make the transition to the earlier stage of the painter's works, that of ink sketches of bodies in different postures and of two oils.

The oils are of a woman clad in black velvet, with hands crossed in her lap, sensibly staring into the horizon and of a peasant sitting on a wooden crate, with a sack of apples and a child playing at her feet and, in the background, houses hidden among trees.

The oils are darker in col-

our, the features are stronger and the mood sadder.

The latter works (water-colours) are pastel, reflecting a state of mind that has come to terms with itself and de-

cided return to nature is the solution.

The exhibition, at the Baladna Art Gallery, opened on Dec. 14 and will last until Dec. 31.



Hani Hourani's water-colour

Princess Basma's experience to benefit women's cause

AMMAN — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma received an invitation by U.N. Secretary General Dr. Boutros Ghali to serve as a member of the International Advisory Group in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace that will be held in Beijing, China, from Sept. 4 to 15, 1995.

The invitation came in a letter by the secretary general in which he states that "Preparations are under way at the national and regional levels to review and appraise the implementation of the Nairobi forward-looking strategies for the advancement of women which were adopted at the 1985 World Conference. In the light of these appraisals, the conference is expected to adopt a platform for concrete action to overcome remaining obstacles in critical areas of concern. These include the feminisation of poverty, the effects of conflict on women and violence against women in society."

Dr. Ghali further stated: "In order to support the objectives of the conference and elicit the widest possible range of innovative ideas on the issues to be addressed, I am establishing an international advisory group of eminent persons to advise me during the preparatory process."

In addressing Her Royal Highness, Dr. Ghali wrote: "I am pleased to invite you to serve as a member of the Advisory Group and would greatly value your participation in this important effort. Your experience and your interest and commitment would enable you to make an important contribution."

Princess Basma is the chairperson of the Jordanian National Committee for Women and is head of the Jordanian public and private sector delegations to the Beijing conference.

The Jordanian National Committee for women conducted in 1992/93 a number of regional meetings and seminars in urban, rural and bedouin areas from which the national strategy for women emerged that will serve as the official Jordanian document for the conference.

Membership on the Advisory Committee is Her Royal Highness Princess Basma's second official U.N. assignment, after being appointed to serve as an Honorary Human Development Ambassador by the United Nations Development Programme in May this year.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ The second exhibition of engineering books at the Jordan Engineers Association.
- ★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrulnissa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

CHRISTMAS BAZAARS

- ★ Christmas bazaar at the Amman International Auto Exhibition/Airport Road.

FILM AND DRAMAS

- ★ Film entitled "Jesus" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m. (120 minutes).
- ★ Drama for children in Arabic entitled "The Question" at Hayat Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.

SPORTS ROUND-UP

- ★ A one-hour programme featuring a condensation of the most popular games of the week with play-by-play announcement at the American Centre at 5:00 p.m.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Hassan condoles Eghzawi family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday visited the Eghzawi family in the Wagas town near Irbid, and conveyed to them His Majesty King Hussein's condolences over the death of Abdul Karim Eghzawi. Prince Hassan's visit to the town was part of a tour of the Irbid Governorate.

Jordanian dies in Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian citizen named Hamed Kamel Hamed died in Iraq, according to Public Security Department sources. The sources said they were told by the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad of the death of Hamed and asked his family and relatives to call at the PSD's Investigation and Criminal Department to arrange for bringing his body or burying him there, the sources said. The late Hamed was born in Osreen, in the occupied West Bank, and is known to the Osreen village Mukhtar Fawzi Said Mufleh, the sources added.

7 cars collide, 5 people injured

AMMAN (Petra) — Five people were injured in a car accident, along Mafrag-Amman road, involving seven cars. The accident was caused by a trailer which stopped suddenly in the middle of the street. Due to poor visibility on the road, a bus driving in the same direction hit the trailer and then five other cars collided in the back.

Ensour inspects work on highway

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzaq Ensour Tuesday inspected work on the Amman-Jerash-Irbid highway project which started in 1988.

Documentaries to help safeguard environment, local traditions

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Creating awareness to safeguard the environment and the natural beauty of the sea, its marine life, the local peoples and their heritage and traditions is the topic of a series of films that the Arabian Sea's Expedition (ASE) plans to film in Jordan and the region, according to Trish Hanley, executive producer of ASE in Hong Kong.

During a short stop in Jordan, Ms. Hanley said Jordan has a naturally rich sea (Red Sea) that should be acknowledged by the Asian societies as well as internationally.

Ms. Hanley, in an interview with the Jordan Times, said ASE which has been granted full endorsement by the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment, aims to produce a series of documentaries that highlight the natural beauty of the marine life and seas surrounding the Arabian Peninsula whilst stressing the need to safeguard these natural resources as an integral part of the future.

Furthermore, Ms. Hanley said the documentaries, which will be dubbed in different languages, will add a voice of concern from the Arab World towards the worldwide environmental movement, move the business community into assuming environmental responsibilities and giving something back to the region, and finally undertake the scientific research and exchange of information with regional and international scientists.

"ASE will produce the first 14 genuine marine documentary films throughout the region," she said.

Ms. Hanley said ASE's focus in the beginning was on the Gulf countries, but ASE decided to include Jordan, Egypt and Yemen because they all fall on sea shores which reflects a real marine life that should serve the documentary series.

"We added these countries because we found out that there is a lot of interest in the Far East for these countries and they all have similar culture," she said.

The package (the documentaries), she maintained, will give people an idea of the life in this region and will carry a positive image of this region.

"We are going to present what is there in a positive way and we are going to be very sensitive of the Arab culture and what to show," she said.

Ms. Hanley stressed the importance of this documentary, with its focus on preserving nature and marine life, with a different technique from other documentaries filmed in this region.

"It is the first time this is going to be a regional matter, and some areas have not been documented (the whole Arabic Sea areas)," she said.

In addition, she maintained, some countries have never been documented, and need to be recognised by other countries. Asian officials, she said, expressed approval of this programme because they can learn a completely new and positive perspective about this

region.

It is intended that the cost of making and distributing these films be raised through sponsorship from the local and international business community, according to Ms. Hanley, who said she hoped some institutions in Jordan will help sponsor the project.

She added that several big companies have been a great asset to the programme, such as Omega watches, DHL, Gulf Air, and Panasonic.

The sponsorship could be in the form of cash or in-kind, such as boats from a local manufacturer, video equipment from a major international manufacturer, video equipment from a major international manufacturer, provisions from a local distributor.

Due to the costs being covered by this sponsorship, she said, ASE intends to distribute these films free of charge to all regional T.V. stations, local governments, ministries, such as information, education, tourism, universities, colleges and schools, to create a wide-spread viewership.

According to Ms. Hanley, talks were held with Ministry of Tourism officials, and were successful.

"Ministry officials were very helpful, and I am planning to visit Petra, Aqaba, and the Dead Sea to get an idea of what needs to be included about Jordan," she said.

"I was favourably impressed by the infrastructure of the touristic sites and the city is very tidy and clean."

The first shots will be taken sometime next year, according to Ms. Hanley.

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A preview of Clinton's 1994 legislative battles

By Dr. James Zogby

AFTER HIS first year in office and enduring an unending parade of bruising battles and high-profile debates, President Bill Clinton will continue to define himself in 1994 as a new Democrat through another series of legislative struggles with Congress.

The first item on the agenda for 1994 is health care reform. During the speech he used to introduce his health care proposal, the president challenged Congress to pass a comprehensive health care reform plan by the end of 1994. As Mr. Clinton has already moved the legislation to Capitol Hill, it is up to the Congress now to pass it.

Of course, at every step along the way, there will be attempts to alter the Clinton proposal to suit various special interests, and the administration is prepared to monitor the entire process very closely and to apply pressure where they feel it's needed. Even as 1993 draws to a close, Mr. Clinton is meeting with doctors' groups and other health care providers and preparing the grass roots network he will need to lobby the Congress on his issue.

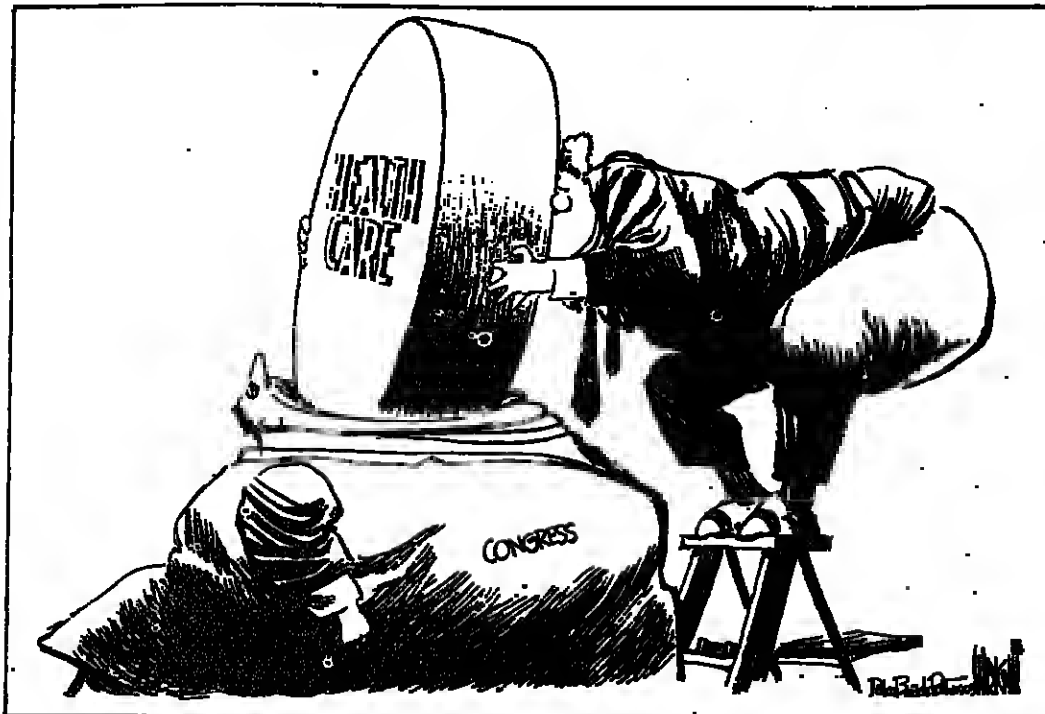
In this battle, Mr. Clinton will need to bring together traditional Democratic allies, the old Democratic coalition of organized labour and minorities. And this may be difficult.

Organised labour is still angry over the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and is trying to balance its need to support health care reform with its desire to show the president that he cannot take labour support for granted. The African American leadership is unhappy with Mr. Clinton over the orientation of his anti-crime package and wary of his upcoming welfare reform proposal.

Although both groups are traditional Democratic allies, and there are few Republicans who will champion their causes, they can be expected to extract the maximum amount of concessions from Mr. Clinton before health care finally comes to a vote next fall.

There is no disagreement over the fact that having more than 38 million Americans without health care is a serious problem, but there is plenty of disagreement over how to fix it. Traditional Republicans are in favour of very limited government involvement and universal access to coverage; while traditional Democrats are in favour of large-scale government involvement to guarantee universal coverage. Between these two groups, Mr. Clinton will be trying to form a consensus that includes as many of the traditional Democrats as possible.

But even as he appeases the elements on the Democratic left, Mr. Clinton will have to work to avoid antagonising the more conservative elements in his own party and the moderate Republicans because he will need votes from both groups to get his proposal passed. And, he is going to need to the votes of these groups to pass the other two major pieces of legislation the administration will propose this year: welfare reform and the anti-crime package.



nistration will propose this year: welfare reform and the anti-crime package.

President Clinton held off from announcing the details of his welfare reform proposal, so he announced merely the simple principles of his plan. But even the way he articulated the principles stirred the political waters.

One of Mr. Clinton's most successful television advertisements during the 1992 campaign was the one in which he promised "to end welfare as we know it" and "make welfare a second chance, not a way of life." As he enters the second year of his presidency, the president has reaffirmed those principles. As with health care, there is broad agreement that the welfare system needs to be fixed and that Mr. Clinton's principles are sound; but as soon as he moves beyond that point of agreement there will be a firestorm of criticism from the Democratic left.

Because the debate over welfare reform will be running concurrent to the health care reform debate, Mr. Clinton will have to manoeuvre carefully to make certain that in putting together his coalition to pass the one he doesn't alienate the coalition he will need to pass the other. And even as he balances these two difficult issues, Mr. Clinton will face an even more daunting task when the Congress begins to finalise the anti-crime package.

Even more than health care and welfare reform, there is a strong national consensus that the crime problem must be dealt with. Recent polls show that Americans rank crime and violence as their number one concern, and the president's anti-crime package — with its emphasis on building more jails, hiring more police and stiffening penalties — seems to be in line with the majority of the country.

But Mr. Clinton's proposal is not at all in line with the majority of his own party. As one Democratic activist complained: "Have you seen the president's crime bill? It's a Republican crime bill!"

That comment illuminates one of the most important

dynamics to emerge in 1993: the fraying of the Democratic coalition.

Although the traditional Democratic alliance of labour, intellectuals and minorities was to some degree cobbled together by Clinton in 1992, his policies since then have re-exposed the rifts that for years have been a source of friction within the party. His new Democratic agenda has pleased neither the liberals nor the conservatives, and both are threatening to abandon him.

At the beginning of December, Mr. Clinton went back to speak at the conference of a group he helped found — the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). The DLC is committed to moving the Democratic Party away from the liberal views it used to espouse and back towards a more centrist agenda. During his tenure as its chairman, Mr. Clinton helped to firmly establish the DLC as a major player in Democratic Party politics.

But the new DLC chairman, congressman Dave McCurdy, at the conference put the administration "on notice" that the DLC "will pressure the White House to a New Democrat agenda." Mr. McCurdy said that the DLC will "fight those who would water down our agenda."

The president tried to be conciliatory at the meeting, and many members of the DLC seemed willing to try to work with him when possible and agree to disagree at other times. But Mr. McCurdy and others who insist upon a strictly conservative social and economic agenda may be at odds with Mr. Clinton for the next three years, because neither side seems willing to "water down" its positions.

It is uncertain how serious this breach is, but with the Democrats' slim majority in Congress, likely to get even smaller after the 1994 mid-term elections, Mr. Clinton will want any rift with the DLC to be as small as possible.

But, as in so many other cases, the president is here, too, caught between two extremes. Even as he tries to reach out to the DLC, he is encountering criticism from the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, especially from its

chief spokesman, Jesse Jackson, and from the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), which now numbers 39 Democrats.

Mr. Jackson and the CBC opposed NAFTA. They want a much more liberal health care reform proposal than the administration has put forward and they oppose Mr. Clinton's centrist stands on welfare reform and crime. Every move that Mr. Clinton makes to appease the DLC alienates this block of liberal African American Democrats.

While Mr. Jackson is in open rebellion against the president, even threatening to run an independent presidential campaign (which would siphon liberal support from Mr. Clinton in much the way that Ross Perot's Independent run hurt George Bush), the CBC is threatening to withhold critical support and Democratic votes for the president's proposed legislation. And with the votes on all his major initiatives expected to be close, the president cannot afford to write off these 39 votes.

All this points to a problem: liberals, and especially African Americans, feel abandoned by the Democratic president they played a crucial role in helping to elect (95 per cent of the African American vote went to Mr. Clinton in 1992). It is ironic that even as the 1992 elections provided the CBC with its largest number of members in history, the political climate left the traditional positions of the CBC as weak as they have been in recent history. And the CBC's members will be holding meetings throughout the winter recess, attempting to plot a strategy for 1994 that emphasises their strength and seeks to halt what it perceives as the centrist drift of the administration.

So, as Mr. Clinton faces Congress in 1994, he comes forward with legislation that most Americans want to see passed. But passing it will not be easy because significant segments of his own party will pull and push in opposite directions to shape the legislation to meet their ideological beliefs. Mr. Clinton will not find it easy to be a winning New Democrat in 1994.

Who writes for who in the op-ed pages

By Richard Harwood

LONG AGO, one of my minor duties was overseeing what passed for the op-ed page of *The Washington Post*. It was an undemanding task. The material was supplied by a stable of famous syndicated columnists — Joe Alsop, Evans and Novak, Joe Kraft, William S. White and Clayton Fritchey, among others. It made of the op-ed page a closed shop; if you weren't in the club, your work had practically no chance of appearing.

For the columnists, it was a good deal. It wasn't such a good deal for the reader, who got a narrow and predictable menu served up every day by the same chefs.

Over the years, the page has evolved into a relatively eclectic intellectual forum. Along with George Will and David Broder, you may get on any given day the wit and wisdom of schoolteachers, lobbyists, cabdrivers and politicians of both high and low rank. The editors are inundated with offerings.

The *New York Times* in 1970 was the first paper to go down the road of "give the voiceless a voice if they write good."

David Shaw, media critic of *The Los Angeles Times*, has described some of the market forces that have brought change to newspaper opinion pages.

Most obvious was the cultural revolution of the 1960s that created a demand for a "new journalism." It brought forth alternative newspapers and magazines and a host of new writers. Their work contrasted starkly with the "predictable or boring" output of the establishment writers.

Before television, the leading pundits derived much of their authority from their intimate association with the great men and women of American and international politics. They defined our rulers for us. But television brought these great men and women into our living rooms, where we could examine their beauty spots and warts and make judgments of our own about their personalities and character.

The prosperity of the media over the past 20 years has been another force in the evolution of the opinion business. Their staffs and budgets expanded exponentially in the '70s and '80s, allowing them to grow their own pundits and put together new syndicates in competition with the Hearsts and other companies that had dominated the industry for a half-century or more.

It is a lucrative business. There are more than 4,000 daily newspapers around the world, plus thousands more high-school and college papers, weeklies, bi-weeklies and monthlies. They are all potential customers. Through mass distribution, a column can be sold to a small newspaper for as little as \$5 or \$10 a week; larger newspapers pay much

more. So a columnist with only a few hundred subscribers has no need of food stamps, even after splitting the gross with a syndicate.

Nevertheless, it is David Shaw's view that the best days of the pundits have passed. Their incomes rise at the same time their influence on public affairs evaporates in the face of rapid technological and cultural change: "In the media opinion-making machinery...punditry is just one more interchangeable part — and not a very important one at that."

"I suspect that the shaping of 'public opinion' is of little concern to many columnists and has little bearing on the 'influence' they wield. Their audience is the political class to which they belong, the people who dominate political life in America."

Meg Greenfield, editorial-page editor of *The Washington Post* and commander of its op-ed page, thinks the columnists are more significant, that their best work gets "absorbed in the bloodstream" of the people.

In a recent industry survey, 98 per cent of readers did not include columns among their favourite newspaper offerings; fewer than half were regular readers. Shaw describes a friend who, after years of editorial writing, concludes that "nobody can change anybody's mind about anything, ever."

I suspect, however, that the shaping of "public opinion" is of little concern to many columnists. William Safire being a leading example, and has little bearing on the "influence" they wield.

Their audience is the political class to which they belong, the people who dominate political life in America.

Their columns are not so-called equivalents of the afternoon soap operas, but personal memos addressed to the White House, the State Department, the Congress and other power centres.

The writer is a former ombudsman of *The Washington Post*. This article is reprinted from *The Washington Post*.

Reps need facilities

THERE HAVE been interesting witness accounts emerging from Monday's meeting at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), at which Finance Minister Sami Gammoh, Industry and Trade Minister Rima Khalaf and CBJ Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi briefed members of the Lower House of Parliament on the state of the economy. Those accounts spoke about how little our honourable representatives knew about economic and the economy and how lawmakers are supposed to review the pros and cons of government policies, whether local or external, except where they are immediately related to expanding services and infrastructure in individual constituencies. The clearest evidence supporting one account was underlined when Dr. Khalaf had to provide a basic explanation about Jordan's application to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The application did not automatically mean that the Kingdom's exports would lose their protective edge in some markets, nor were Jordan's ports to be thrown wide open to all kinds of foreign products. The new minister also had to explain that a labyrinth of protracted negotiations lies ahead before Jordan could join GATT — a fact that not many MPs knew about beforehand.

For predictable but unfathomable reasons, the most-heard question in the CBJ meeting room was why the "rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer." Unless coupled with substantiating statistics, the question would be largely rhetorical, and no member of the government could be expected to answer such a query. If anything, it underlines the one-track political minds of some of our deputies and the lack of economic education for others.

In any case, the blame for this cannot be and should not be put only at the door of our honourable deputies, given the fact that a degree in economics was not a prequalifying factor for running in the elections or winning a seat in Parliament. But if we expect our legislative body to be the watchdog it should be over our economic development, not to mention being able to prevent any government from getting away with policies that may do us harm, it is inevitable that our deputies be armed with at least general knowledge about even complicated issues. That does not mean they should take basic lessons in economics if they do not have the time or energy. But the lessons should go to them, at least in the form of research assistants and facilities that would help them gain firsthand knowledge of not only economics but also of other issues where statistics matter very much.

That is where our call for support facilities for deputies becomes necessary. The government should make it possible for deputies to get all the assistance they need. And although it might be somewhat costly to provide every deputy with an office, a secretary and a research assistant, the cost would nevertheless be bearable and well worth it, considering the benefits the people would reap from such a civilised and necessary-for-democracy move.

Lawmaking and watching over the executive branch are not a simple process of passing judgement, based only on political merit. They are an art that can be mastered by people with a lot of common sense, each hopefully becoming an expert in his or her own field, after facilities of study and research are adequately provided and our democratic experiences further cemented and strengthened.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PRESIDENT ASSAD's message to King Hussein is related to the continued coordination among Arab countries vis-a-vis Israel's expansionist policies, said Al Dastour daily Tuesday. The paper said that the message reflected mainly on consultations between Syria and Jordan, regarding cooperation between Amman and Damascus for the sake of attaining a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Damascus and Amman have, from the start, announced determination to accept peace on all Arab-Israeli tracks, one which is based on justice, said the daily. Therefore, continuation of consultations was something normal between two partners which bear similar views and act towards attaining the same objectives.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour criticised the Labour Ministry for repeatedly announcing measures to reduce the number of guest workers in Jordan, but taking no practical steps to translate the measures into facts. Mohammad Daoud said that the ministry is not shouldering its task and duty and is not implementing the law which orders businesses to employ Jordanians at the rate of at least 50 per cent of the total workers. He said that the ministry has also ignored calls on the part of the public, which has been complaining about unfair treatment of workers and repeated calls for addressing this problem. The writer said that more than 50,000 non-Jordanians are working in Jordan without permits and he demanded a clear reply from the labour minister to end this awkward situation.

U.N. galvanised by end of cold war but stopped cold by local warlords

By Rene Slama
Agence France Presse

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations emerged from the cold war galvanised by the prospect of global cooperation, but this year has shown how determined local warlords in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia-Herzegovina can stymie even the combined force of the great powers.

This defeat was most clearly seen in the decision of U.S. authorities to order the amphibious landing craft Harlan County to steam out of Port-au-Prince's harbour on Oct. 11 because of protests by a small group of armed demonstrators, believed controlled by the country's military leaders.

The protestors were bent on preventing the disembarkment of U.S. and Canadian troops sent to train Haiti's security forces.

The small band proved more powerful than the United Nations, and symbolised how a well-meaning operation could be doomed by a lack of determination and coherence in the great powers unwilling to commit themselves to internal con-

flicts. "Haiti has been a victim of the Somali syndrome," said a western diplomat here. Just days before the setback in Haiti, 18 U.S. peacekeepers in Somalia were killed in a clash with Mohamed Farah Aided's troops.

If U.S. determination took a blow from those deaths, it was further undermined by the capture of a U.S. pilot, and his appearance on U.S. television with a battered face and broken body.

Nervous about the reaction from lawmakers never anxious to see the U.S. play the world's policeman, especially under U.N. command, President Bill Clinton made a 180-degree turn and urged the United Nations to suspend an arrest order issued for Aided in June after the killing of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers.

The United States also transported Aided to peace talks in Ethiopia in hopes that the various Somali factions could hammer out a peace accord before the U.S. deadline of late March for bringing its troops home.

But even with a peace agreement, there is the likelihood of

deterioration in Somalia, James Jonah, the U.S. under-secretary general for political affairs said last month.

If the fighting does erupt again, there will be no shortage of weaponry since most factions are believed to have hidden arms caches for the day when the international community withdraws.

Europe has shown a similar lack of resolve in Bosnia. Some nations have backed and enforced economic sanctions on Belgrade. Others at the United Nations, especially French General Philippe Morillon, have shown great courage in guaranteeing delivery of humanitarian aid.

But these efforts have not prevented the Serbians from nibbling away at Muslim-held territory and from showing up at the peace talks in Geneva in a position of strength.

Serbian leader Radovan Karadzic's followers have deftly taken advantage of this difference of opinion between the harder-line United States and European nations with troops on the ground, repeatedly calling the bluff of tough U.N. Security Council warnings. "Each time the Americans

issued strong warnings to the Serbs, the French and the British deliberately undermined them by claiming that their troops on the ground would be endangered," said a diplomat here.

"Is public opinion really supportive of military intervention?" a European diplomat asks. "It's true, we haven't had a great success. But we tried. Today, in the ex-Yugoslavia, the means have not been enough to overcome the problems."

Cambodia has been the only exception — a real success in a year of disappointments and failures.

With the massive turnout in May elections, Cambodians dealt a hard blow to the Khmer Rouge who had threatened the peace process and called voters to boycott the polls.

The U.N. operation in Cambodia had been one of the largest ever undertaken. It succeeded because the peace agreement was a good one, deadlines were respected and because the five permanent U.N. Security Council members (Britain, China, France and the United States) stuck together.

LETTERS

Italian contribution

To the Editor:

Referring to the article "Graduation of mosaics restorers" Jordan Times, Dec. 25/26, 1993, I would like to add that the Italian contribution to the said project — starting since 1990 — is the following:

— A grant of 2 billion Italian Liras (\$1,300,000) within the framework of the Italian-Jordanian Technical Assistance Protocol. (The project, for the Italian side is supposed to last till August 1995).

— Seven scholarships to Jordanian trainees in Italy for courses at the School of Mosaics in Ravenna (three of them are still in Italy).

— Restoration of the mosaic of the Church of the Apostles in Madaba.

— Continuous presence of an Italian expert since March 1993.

The school activities started in October 1992, utilising facilities offered by the Jordanian Ministry of Education.

The Italian side, as soon as the premises are ready, will provide the furniture for the school, including the two laboratories, and the presence of other Italian experts.

The Madaba Mosaic School is a Jordanian school administered by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in cooperation with the Italian government and the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism.

Finally, I would like to stress that since 1977 the Italian government is sponsoring and financing several projects in Jordan (in cooperation with the competent Jordanian authorities) related to cultural preservation and conservation.

Chargé d'Affaires,
Dr. Diego Brasoli,
Italian embassy,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Features

Third World wary of big power Somalia pullout

By Buchizya Mseteka

Reuters

MOGADISHU — African and other Third World nations serving with the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia are wary about the future after the big guns leave.

"The questions being asked back at home at the moment are like why should we stay and face death when powerful, far richer nations with the capability to do things are leaving?" a commander of an African contingent told Reuters.

"One shot at us or even one death from militia activity and we are out of this place," he added.

Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Botswana, Zambia and Uganda are among the African states which have sent troops to Somalia to try to contain clan fighting that destroyed the economy and exacerbated a raging famine.

The western states which form the backbone of the 29,000-strong U.N. army — France, Belgium, Italy, Germany and the U.S. — are preparing to leave with all their airpower and ground armour. Troops from some Asian and European countries will also remain in the destroyed Horn of Africa country, but there is growing apprehension that the most ambitious U.N. peacekeeping force of recent times will be thrown into disarray by the withdrawal of the United States and other big military powers.

"The U.N. military operation will be left virtually naked and completely vulnerable to militia attacks," one U.N. military officer told Reuters. "Unless equipment, particularly air power, can be replaced quickly the whole operation risks being thrown off course or complete collapse," he added.

On Monday the top U.S. military officer, General John Shalikashvili told the U.N. alliance to be ready to stand on its own feet after Washington and its allies are gone in March.

"You're on your own after March 31" was the message given by the chairman of the U.S. military Joint Chiefs of Staff to U.N. commanders in several meetings, U.N. officials said.

Asked before he flew back to Washington on Monday

whether the U.S. would leave behind heavy equipment, Gen. Shalikashvili said he hoped some other nations would bring in their own.

"We hope some other countries can come in and bring in some equipment for the U.N. force. We will be taking with us most of our equipment," he told reporters.

But U.N. officials said the remaining countries lacked the resources and tools to do what Gen. Shalikashvili expected of them.

"Most of these countries, just like Somalia, rely on foreign aid and assistance. To leave them on their own out here is to kiss goodbye to the whole operation," an aid worker said.

In a sign that the U.S. was washing its hands of Somalia, Gen. Shalikashvili earlier told his troops: "If the U.N. mission doesn't turn out the way we pray it should, then so be it."

U.N. commanders fear that without the logistics, armour and equipment provided by the United States and other western nations, the alliance would collapse and the broken Horn of Africa country would plunge back to civil war.

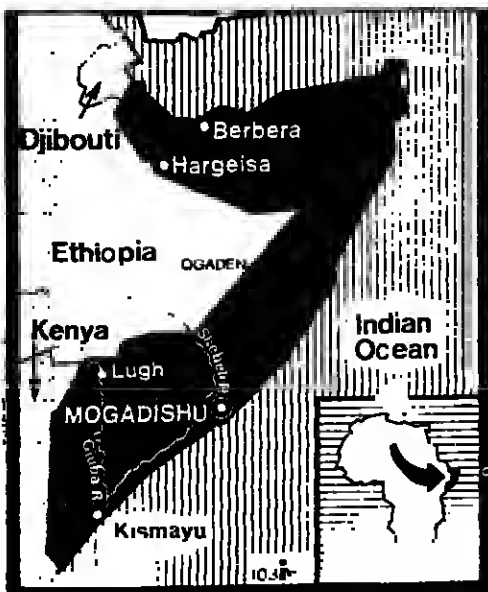
U.N. commanders say they are worried by talk that Somalia's warring factions are rearming themselves and regrouping for battle after peace talks in Addis Ababa collapsed this month.

"They can see that the West is cutting and running. They know that in the end might will triumph and so they are busy shopping, busy strengthening their forces," a U.N. diplomat said.

Ferocious battles in October in which 18 U.S. Army Rangers were killed by warlord Mohammed Farah Aided's militiamen, shattered U.S. public support for the intervention launched last December to open up food corridors.

President Bill Clinton later announced that all troops would leave by March 31. Directly linked to the U.S. move, other western countries also said they would leave.

"The West still has the capacity to save Somalia, to help the country prevent a return to war, to famine and to massive deaths we saw before December. But the political will is lacking," a U.N. political officer told Reuters.



Two archaeologists stumble on general's tomb

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO, Egypt — Around the village of Abou Sir a storm rages whipping up long fingers of sand which draw a dull crackly veil over everything. In the sun's strange amber glow the pyramid of Abou Sir rises, shrouded in mystery. Although only about 75 kilometres from Cairo, the whole area is cut off from the tourist routes and is rich in unspoiled charm. Only a privileged few can claim to have seen this pyramid of the Old Kingdom (2686-2160 B.C.) close up — those whose sports or horse riding activities bring them to this area of the desert.

This forgotten area is the scene of a recent discovery that has thrilled archaeologists. Two of them — sent on a routine mission — discovered the tomb of a high-ranking general of Pharaoh Ramses II (1304-1237 B.C.). The tomb of Nachkt Min is located near the village of Abou Sir, where dwellings give way to the sands and rocks of the high plain of Ghiza. The village cemetery, with its tombs gaily painted in sky-blue or yellow, is just a few metres away from the place where archaeologists Ezzat Al Ghindi, 32, and his assistant Sahri

Farag, 25, noticed the opening of a shaft which led them to their discovery.

The entrance to the tomb of the Ambassador General Prince Nachkt Min appears to be a temporary affair with its wooden planks and foot-bridges, all signs of an active dig. The wind blows stronger, coating sand over the silhouettes of the simple country houses and the green dome of a shrine. But the atmosphere inside the tomb is calm, silent and somewhat fresh. The two young archaeologists are at work with the foremen of the site, Talal Al Kreti and Mohammed Chehat, as well as some specialised workmen who are busy restoring the writing and paintings on the walls which have been cleared of sand.

"The writing tells us that the tomb belongs to Prince Nachkt Min, chief commander of the war chariots of Ramses II and special envoy to foreign lands," said Ezzat Al Ghindi. "It is an interesting discovery because it is the only tomb of the New Kingdom (1567-330 B.C.) in the region of Abou Sir, where only tombs of the first six dynasties have been found."

Mr. Al Ghindi and Mr.

Farag are both graduates of the archaeology Department of Cairo's Faculty of Letters. They had never imagined that their research would lead them to this major discovery in the area of Abou Sir, which the authorities had designated to them. In fact, the aim of their work was to gather more data about the Old Kingdom, since the region is rich in traces of this period. During one of their routine missions there, the two noticed a circular pattern in the sand which turned out to be the mouth of a shaft. When they cleared away the sand, they went down into the tomb which was filled with sand up to 40 cm from the ceiling.

"We started straightaway emptying the sand from the first room. Then we opened another entrance and blocked up the shaft which was threatening to collapse. We found many fragments of murals and parts of the ceiling columns in the sand," explained Mr. Al Ghindi.

Smiling broadly, he cannot conceal his delight. For him and Mr. Sabri, the discovery of the tomb is a constant source of joy, despite their difficult working conditions. They do not have a car and access to their site is not an easy matter:

they juggle with different means of transport each morning followed by a few kilometres walking in open desert before they reach "their" tomb. They spend seven hours a day in the limited and heavy air of the underground vaults. They eat only when they return home in the evening, but their enthusiasm is undiminished.

"Anyway, Dr. Bakr, Director General of Antiquities, promised to assign one of his service vehicles to us," said Mr. Al Ghindi. And they truly deserve it: this Prince Nachkt Min was clearly an important individual.

The caviary had been the latest and most prestigious weapon of the pharaohs since the era of Toumosis III of the eighth dynasty. Horses were used exclusively for pulling light wooden two-wheeled chariots, mounted by two soldiers. One soldier drove the chariot and the other fought. In the time of Ramses II, the Egyptian cavalry represented a rapid development weapon with many strategic advantages. In the reign of this bellicose pharaoh there were at least 15 foreign war campaigns in Asia (Phoenicia, Syria, Galilee, etc.) and it was no easy task to be the commander

in chief of the cavalry. High ranking officers who were often summoned to the pharaoh to discuss battle plans or deployment of troops had to be skilful people, cultured and with wide experience.

"At the time of Ramses II, the country's administrative capital was Thebes (now called Luxor), whereas the general garrison was here at Memphis," said Mr. Al Ghindi. "It is likely that General Nachkt Min built two tombs for himself, one here and the other in the Valley of the Nobles at Luxor. Until we open up the funeral chamber we will not know if he is buried here."

That time has not yet come. First, all the restoration work has to be completed and the ceiling over the different rooms strengthened. The rock is showing worrying cracks and metal scaffolding is already in place in the three rooms. The entrance to the funeral chamber lower down is blocked by a large rock fall and retains its secrets. The walls are covered with hieroglyphics.

"Here is one of the most interesting aspects of the tomb," said Mr. Al Ghindi. "These hieroglyphics represent a chapter from the Book of

Deaths, the Book of Doors, and there is only one other example of its kind in Tomb 158 in the Valley of the Nobles at Luxor. In fact this tomb is a perfect example of the tombs of the Theban nobility. Until we open up the funeral chamber, we can only speculate as to why it is located in Lower Egypt."

During the excavation, the two archaeologists have found fragments of a plate from the Islamic period. "This proves that this site was visited several centuries ago and was probably used as a hiding-place or for storage," Mr. Al Ghindi explained.

For now the tomb is closed to the public, but the two men hope that their discovery will mark the beginning of a new era for the region of Abou Sir. A few kilometres away teams of workmen are freeing the pyramid's huge stone access ramp which was hidden by sand.

"Access to the whole area has to be made easier, and infrastructure has to be put in place for visitors. Abou Sir has never featured on the tourists map of Egypt and it's time that changed," said Mr. Al Ghindi — World News Link.



Workmen clear the causeway of the pyramid where a general of Ramses II may be buried at Abou Sir, a village in the Egyptian desert (WNL photo)



During a routine visit to Abou Sir, assistant Sabri Farag discovered a shaft archaeologist Ezzat Al Ghindi (left) and his leading to a tomb (WNL photo)

British SAS man writes of desert derring-do behind Iraqi lines

By Peter Millership

Reuters

LONDON — A British special forces soldier has published a vivid first-hand account of a secret mission to destroy Iraqi Scud missile launchers during the Gulf war and his subsequent capture and torture.

In his book "Bravo two zero", the soldier, using the pseudonym Andy McNab, tells how his Special Air Service (SAS) regiment patrol was dropped behind enemy lines on Jan. 22, 1991, in the so-called "Scud triangle" where Iraq was firing missiles at Israel.

Spotted by a young Arab goatherd, the eight men were forced into a series of fire-fights in which they killed or injured 250 Iraqi soldiers in five days.

Two of the team died of exposure, one was killed by enemy fire, four were captured and one escaped.

The exploits of the patrol, dressed in Arab headgear, operating on foot with heavy packs and armed to the teeth, have entered special forces history.

McNab, 33, gives insights into the workings of the secretive SAS, whose most famous operation was the storming of Iran's besieged London embassy in 1981.

Gulf Commander General Norman Schwarzkopf, who had a bad experience using special forces in Vietnam, was persuaded by British Commander General Sir Peter de la Billiere to send his former regiment behind enemy lines.

The operation brought together 300 SAS soldiers, its

biggest concentration on the ground since the regiment — motto "Who dares, wins" — was founded in World War II.

Patrol leader McNab says his first intention was to blow up Scud launchers by sabotage and the next option was an overt attack. The last option was to guide in an air strike.

Early in the raid the patrol's radio, supposed to transmit in a short undetectable burst, failed and they lost communication with headquarters.

Then just hours later a young goatherd stumbled on them. "Do we top (kill) him? Too much noise. Anyway, what was the point? I wouldn't want that on my conscience for the rest of my life."

The screaming boy alerted nearby Iraqi soldiers and the outnumbered patrol launched in all-out attack, destroying

armoured personnel carriers and infantry trucks with a fusillade of anti-armour rockets, rifle grenades and machinegun fire.

They then abandoned their backpacks, which contained two weeks' supplies and equipment, and the radio and "tabbed" — SAS slang for moving quickly — towards Syria.

The patrol was split up in rain, sleet and then snow. McNab and four of the men hijacked a taxi but drove accidentally into a checkpoint. Firing a hail of bullets, they fled into the desert with 1,600 Iraqi soldiers in pursuit.

Just 10 km from Syria, the men had a last-ditch gunfight with the Iraqis in which two of the SAS men plunged into the freezing Euphrates River to escape. Of the five, one was shot dead, one died from

exposure and three were captured.

As for the missing trio, one died of dehydration, one was captured and another escaped and walked 240 km in seven days with just two biscuits to keep him going.

McNab's one-month imprisonment was punctuated by horrific torture with whips, planks and burning irons. At one point a dentist was brought in "to examine" McNab's teeth. "He gripped the first stump of tooth with pliers and twisted hard."

He never admitted being a member of the SAS and was released at the end of the war.

McNab tells of his deadly skills, explaining that "slotting" (killing) with a combat knife is not as easy as in war films. "In reality, you have to get

hold of his head, hoik it back as you would with a sheep, and just keep on cutting until you've gone right through the windpipe and the head has just about come away in your hands."

On the patrol's courage and endurance, one soldier recalled a memorial at SAS headquarters Herefordshire, central England:

"We are the pilgrims, master, we shall go/always a little further it may be/beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow/across that angry or that glimmering sea..."

McNab's conclusion in the book was not so poetic: "I was a soldier, that's what I was paid for. It was very exciting. I got high doing it. And as for the people who interrogated me, if I met any of them in the street tomorrow, I'd slot them."

Deng book offers glimpse into leader's mind

By Kathy Wilhelm

The Associated Press

BEIJING — Even as rumours of his imminent death swirl yet again, Deng Xiaoping has reached out from the seclusion of official retirement to offer the world a glimpse into his mind.

"Is it possible to quadruple (the) economy by the end of the century? I'd like to live until then, to see this achieved," he mused to colleagues in September 1989, contemplating living until age 96.

China had just been convulsed by popular protests, unmatched in four decades under communism, demanding an end to corrupt and autocratic rule. Soldiers had slain hundreds of protesters and the West was closing ranks against China, cutting off loans and aid.

Yet, in that conversation, reproduced in the newly published "Deng Xiaoping's selected works: volume three," Mr. Deng looked far ahead and stressed economic growth as the ultimate solution to China's domestic and foreign problems.

"This is what I lose sleep over," he said six months later, returning to the subject.

Economic growth is Mr. Deng's favourite theme

throughout this collection of 119 speeches and conversations from 1982-92, the decade of his greatest power.

They offer a powerful image of the 89-year-old leader, who repeatedly refuses to let party bickering or economic and political upheavals distract from his main goal: to transform China from a synonym for poverty into a modern power and win redress for a century of insults from the West.

The most important factor in domestic stability is whether people can see their lives getting better, he told his Communist Party colleagues. Also, he said, how quickly China becomes rich will determine whether it can withstand the pressures of rich countries and set policies in its own best interest.

Mr. Deng, China's paramount leader for 15 years despite official retirement, has gained flexibility and strength from his low profile.

He never sought the mass worship Mao Tse-Tung craved or the mass familiarity western leaders acquire through frequent news conferences and interviews. As a result, he has been one of the world's least-understood leaders, mistaken at times for a democrat and a westerner.

Western scholars debate whether he can be called a

Marxist, as his policies return a host of capitalist ills to China: unemployment, sweatshop labour, drug addiction, investment scams that prey on ordinary people, a glaring gap between rich and poor.

The modest-looking "volume three" — 418 pages of small print between plain white paper covers — does not answer all the questions, but does make clear that Mr. Deng considers himself a good Marxist.

Nor are the contents entirely new. Forty-seven entries were compiled and published in English several years ago, and others have been published separately.

In the comments to colleagues in September 1989, Mr. Deng said: "The developed countries have not changed their policy of bullying backward countries. China must secure its position."

Don't worry about the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellites, he lectured. Just worry about China.

"China must earnestly and genuinely carry out reform and opening up," he said. "Without reform and opening up, there is no hope."

Again and again, Mr. Deng demands speed ("a slow pace is equal to coming to a standstill or even going backward") and innovation ("we have to

be daring or we will never be able to modernise").

If it judges by his own priorities, history will rate Mr. Deng as phenomenally successful: The economy has grown an average 9 per cent annually and China is experimenting with stock and futures exchanges, new management methods, labour markets, private business and private schools.

From the United Nations to the Olympics, China has become a presence to be reckoned with in world assemblies. But Mr. Deng shows a complete lack of understanding when it comes to human rights, democracy and the demands of the student-led protesters of 1989 for some say in their own future.

"Our political ideological education work has been lacking. Their goal was to establish a capitalist republic in vassalage to the West," he said five days after tanks rolled through Beijing streets in June 1989 to drive protesters from Tiananmen Square.

"Volume three" appeared just weeks after Mr. Deng's youngest daughter, Deng Rong, published a fond biography. Newspapers have devoted pages to excerpting and praising the books, and the collected works are required reading for political study classes in

the army, schools, government offices and state factories.

The public-relations blitz, extraordinary for Mr. Deng, has an immediate political purpose.

His "volume three" lands on official desks just before a party congress that is expected to adopt key structures for a market economy, including a strong central bank.

Heated debate can be expected on the transition to a market economy, which has hit painful snags, but anyone who argues for slow, cautious growth will find himself up against the words of Mr. Deng, something few party members would risk.

A longer-term motive, now projected for everything Mr. Deng does and says, is to stamp his policies so deeply into the national psyche that they will prevail after his death, which every few months is rumoured to be imminent.

If Mr. Deng has his way, his death will be almost irrelevant to China. That is why he retired, he explains in various conversations, gradually shedding posts in the late 1980s.

"It is hard to predict how the world will react if I die in office," he said, and again: "It's very unhealthy for a country's fate to be built on the prestige of one or two people."

Since power in China does

not come from titles, Mr. Deng's prestige and authority continue to dwarf his chosen heirs, including Jiang Zemin, head of the Communist Party.

Jiang, with a weak personal power base and only four years in the job, knows that wearing Mr. Deng's mantle will help only if Mr. Deng is made larger than life. Thus Mr. Jiang is the biggest promoter of "volume three," praising it as an "ideological treasure" like the works of Marx, Lenin and Mao.

Maybe he hasn't read this entry from 1989:

Arafat

(Continued on page 1)

Mr. Beedh has refused to leave the southern port city of Aden for Sanaa since Aug. 19.

Arafat in Sudan

Mr. Arafat arrived in Khartoum from Yemen Tuesday, for talks with Sudanese leaders on the progress of the Israeli-PLO autonomy talks.

The PLO leader told reporters he would discuss with Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir the problems blocking implementation of the Palestinian autonomy accord.

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Ministry of Supply

Tender for

RUSSEIFA GRAIN SILO PROJECT

1. The Ministry of Supply of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan invites international firms, specialised in manufacturing, supply, erection and commissioning of grain handling equipment as the leading main contractors, to submit a proposal for design, construction, equipping and commissioning of the project; in association with a local contractor who will be responsible for civil works.

2. The project comprises the necessary alterations and additions to convert the existing Jordan Phosphate Company silos to be used as grain storage silos.

The existing silos comprise 4 No. concrete vertical silos sited at Russeifa on the Zarqa-Amman highway. Each silo is a single bin 26 metres in diameter and 20 metres in height, with steel structured roof and covered connecting bridge on the top as well as a concrete tunnel under.

3. The project is to be considered as a turnkey project (design and installation); based on the preliminary drawings and tender documents prepared by Ministry of Supply).

4. The association of international and local contractors could be either a joint venture or a subcontract agreement.

The leading party of the association shall be the international firm specialised in manufacturing and erection of grain handling equipment.

5. Interested international firms or their representatives may obtain the tender documents from the Tenders Department of the Ministry of Supply during office hours not later than 31/1/1994 against a non-refundable fee of JD150. Latest date for submitting the offers will be before 12.00 noon on March 31, 1994.

U.N. blames Bosnian army for sparking massive Serb attack

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The United Nations Tuesday blamed the Muslim-dominated Bosnian army for sparking an unprecedented Bosnian Serb artillery barrage on Sarajevo by launching an assault on a Serb-held district.

The charge came as the U.N. investigated Bosnian Croat accusations that government forces had committed atrocities in central Bosnia.

Meanwhile, hundreds of civilians waited in heavy snow for convoys they hoped would take them out of war-ravaged Sarajevo Tuesday as fighting raged across Bosnia.

The first eight buses carrying evacuees were seen departing from the city's railway station. They headed towards the Serb-held district of Lukavica, a short distance from the capital and were escorted by Bosnian police and Bosnian Red Cross officials.

The hundreds waiting in the cold to escape from the besieged Bosnian capital on convoys organised by city authorities were mostly elderly, war-wounded or mothers with children.

If the buses crossed the front line successfully and were able to leave the besieged city, they were expected to return for one or two more loads of passengers.

The buses were due to shuttle 1,265 people out of Sarajevo to Lukavica, a few kilometres southwest of the capital.

New convoys for Serb and Croat areas were expected to form up in Lukavica.

The United Nations was planning two medical evacuations out of Sarajevo Tuesday, with seven patients and eight

of their relatives headed for Denmark, while eight others and nine accompanying relatives were destined for the United States.

In Sarajevo suburbs, sporadic shelling continued Tuesday following fierce fighting Monday between Serbs and Muslim-led Bosnian army troops, the U.N. said.

City hospitals reported at least seven dead and 52 wounded in Monday's fighting.

Maj. Van Biesebroeck said 686 shells hit government-held territory and 126 impacts hit Bosnian Serb ground Monday.

Most of the front line fighting overnight and Tuesday morning was in the western suburbs of Rajlovac and Stup. Maj. Van Biesebroeck said.

A Christmas-New Year's truce, agreed last week between all three combatants, was supposed to last through Jan. 15 but it has failed to stop the bloodshed in Bosnia between warring Serbs, Croats and Muslims.

The U.N. planned to investigate allegations that the Bosnian army killed captured Croat soldiers and may also have killed a number of Croat villagers, Maj. Van Biesebroeck said.

He said a U.N. patrol Sunday found the body of a Croat soldier in a village near the embattled central town of Gorinji Vakuf.

"He was killed by an axe blow to the head and was without a doubt a prisoner," a duty officer at a U.N. Protection Force base in Kiseljak told Reuters.

British troops stationed in central Bosnia had begun an inquiry into Croat allegations that five Croat soldier de-

tainees were burned to death in the same area, the U.N. military official said.

Croatian News Agency (HINA) reported Muslim-led forces attacked Croat positions at the village of Krcevine, northeast of Vitez, Tuesday morning.

Croatian radio said Tuesday five civilians were killed and two wounded from Muslim shelling near the central Bosnian town of Travnik.

In the southern city of Mostar, Croats fired 40 rounds on besieged Muslims in the east sector of the town Tuesday and there was continuous small arms and machine-gun fire along the confrontation line, Maj. Van Biesebroeck said.

The central Bosnia offensive by the Muslim-dominated army could provoke Croatian intervention in Bosnia, Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic warned here Monday.

In a letter to European Community (EC) foreign ministers Mr. Granic said the "Muslim offensive against the last Croat enclaves is intensifying by the hour," and risked sparking "a large-scale Croatian-Muslim conflict with unforeseen consequences."

He called on the EC to press the Muslim-dominated Bosnian army into halting its offensive in central Bosnia in order to prevent a greater tragedy, the HINA reported.

Mr. Granic hinted Zagreb could withdraw concessions made to the Sarajevo authorities in talks on the division of the country into three ethnically-based mini-states, unless the Bosnian government ordered its forces to call off their attacks.

The Christmas and New Year truce between the Croatian army and rebel Croatian Serbs was largely respected, the commander of UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia said Tuesday.

However, breaches in the south of the breakaway Krajina region "did not augur well for the near future" said UNPROFOR's General Jean Cot in a statement released here.

The Dec. 24 to Jan. 15 truce was "generally respected" said Gen. Cot, adding that the "situation was relatively calm... The number of violations of the ceasefire having considerably diminished."

But Gen. Cot said breaches of the truce in the Licki Osik, Benkovac, Miranje, Novi Grad and Smilic areas were a cause for concern.

In Belgrade, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party (SPS) has fallen short of an overall majority after Sunday's repeat vote in 45 polling stations in Serbia, unofficial results showed.

The new round, repeated because of irregularities at the Dec. 19 poll, did not affect earlier standings.

The SPS will be the largest party in parliament with 123 seats, but this is below a clear majority in the 250-seat parliament needed to form its own government.

The opposition group DEPOS won 45 seats, the extreme nationalist Radical Party 39, the Democratic Party 29, Democratic Party of Serbia seven, Democratic Union of Vojvodina Hungarians five, and Albanian coalition two seats.



FRESH BREAD IN HIGH WATERS: An inhabitant of Esbly, France, returned with fresh bread from the bakers, to the flooded house where his canine friend awaits patiently for the waters of the River Marne to recede (AFP photo)

Ciampi puts his fate in hands of parliament

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi put his job in the hands of the country's scandal-tainted parliament Tuesday, saying he would decide his fate after a no-confidence debate due next month.

"It's the government's duty to wait for the Jan. 12 debate," Mr. Ciampi said at his annual end-of-year news conference when asked whether he would resign over the motion.

A former governor of Italy's Central Bank who was appointed head of government last April, Mr. Ciampi said his administration was prepared to resign, having achieved its two main aims of piloting electoral reform and a 1994 austerity budget through parliament.

But he stressed that Italy needed a government which could guarantee stability, democracy and normality in the run-up to a watershed general election, expected early next year.

Boy shackled to bed for opening present early

CHICAGO (AFP) — An eight-year-old boy was apparently punished for opening a Christmas present too early by being shackled to a bed and left alone in a dark apartment, authorities said. The boy, whose name was not released, was shackled to a bunk bed by his ankle and dressed only in an undershirt when police found him in an unlit apartment, police said. An anonymous tipster telephoned police to report the abuse. Madeline and David Wavel, the boy's mother and stepfather, had taken an older brother and gone to visit her mother, said Dupage County State's Attorney James Ryan. Both children were placed with relatives. The couple was charged with child endangerment and reckless conduct, said Ryan. If convicted, they could be sentenced to a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

Japanese diver finds sunken Portuguese wreck

JAKARTA (AFP) — A Japanese diver working at a pearl ranch has found what is believed to be the wreck of an ancient Portuguese ship which sank off the spice island of Banda in the Moluccas, the Antara News Agency said. Hironori Imanishi found the half buried wreck at a depth of 20 metres off Banda Besar Island, in central Moluccas earlier this month, Antara said. Four cannons were found with the wreck, reported to be in a bad state, and one of them has since been lifted ashore and taken to the office of a local pearl cultivating company. A local official said the wreck could be 500 years old, dating back to the time the Portuguese first came here in trade spices.

Morrison loses manuscripts in house fire

GRAND VIEW, New York (AFP) — Nobel Literature Prize winner Toni Morrison said she lost all her manuscripts in a fire that burned down her country house at the weekend. Saturday's fire, which took more than 100 firefighters five hours to put out, may have been caused by an ember from a fireplace. Ms. Morrison's son Slade Morrison told firefighters. Asked which of her manuscripts had been destroyed in the fire that razed the four-storey house near the Hudson River on Christmas Day, the 1993 Nobel prizewinner for literature said she had lost them all, including her earliest writings.

Germans rush to exchange gifts

BONN (AFP) — Department stores and gift shops were taken by storm Monday as Germans indulged in their favourite post-Christmas treat — exchanging presents they do not like or that conked out before the holidays were over. German stores traditionally exchange clothes, hi-fi material, teddy bears or household appliances for other items or refunds as long as the merchandise is returned with the proper receipt. One in four presents is thus returned to the store where it was bought, generally before the end of the year, and salesclerks spend up to three hours a day just for post-Christmas swaps, according to the Retail Trade Federation. Monday many shops also offered savings of up to 50 per cent.

Police turn tables on radio eavesdroppers

DONCASTER, England (R) — Police in northern England turned the tables on radio hams who eavesdrop on police radio by issuing a spoof broadcast of aliens landing nearby and then arresting those who turned up to see the "space-men". South Yorkshire Police Force launched "Operation Marconi" when they suspected criminals were cashing in on information gleaned from the airwaves. The Guardian daily newspaper reported. The eavesdroppers "could hardly believe their ears — aliens were invading planet Earth... Doncaster was the exact," the report, citing the latest edition of a local police magazine, said. It said several people were arrested and charged with acting illegally on information in police broadcasts. Scanning equipment can be legally purchased for a few pounds and it is not illegal to eavesdrop on police broadcasts.

Seoul casts doubts on N. Korean 'bomb'; U.S. threatens U.N. move

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea cast doubt Tuesday on a report that Pyongyang had already built a nuclear bomb, as Washington threatened to take the matter to the U.N. Security Council and Japan offered to mediate in the dispute.

South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said there was no proof that North Korea had managed to make atomic weapons, although "it has a strong desire to develop them."

"We have accurate information on the nuclear issue. So far we cannot say that North Korea has nuclear weapons... we are exchanging information and are in close consultation with Washington (on the matter)," Mr. Kim was quoted by Yonhap News Agency as

saying. In Washington, meanwhile, a State Department spokeswoman said the United States would have no alternative but to go to the Security Council to demand sanctions against Pyongyang if negotiations failed to resolve the dispute.

But she also said the U.S. expected its dialogue with Pyongyang to continue, as a special envoy of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali told Seoul that the North saw dialogue with the United States as the sole way to end the problem.

In Tokyo, where concern has spiralled since Pyongyang threatened in March to quit the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata said Japan was ready to play a mediatory role

in the dispute.

Japan, he said could help sway Pyongyang to accept outside inspections of its suspected facilities because its gap with North Korea recently appeared to be narrowing, after Tokyo had admitted guilt in wartime atrocities.

"We will continue to make an effort to keep in contact with (North Korea) and would like it to return to international society," Mr. Hata said.

Pakistan Premier Benazir Bhutto, due in Pyongyang Wednesday, is also reported to be ready to act as go-between. To date-most hopes of outside influence on Pyongyang had been pinned on Beijing, the only remaining ally of the isolated and hardline Stalinist regime of 81-year-old Kim Il-Sung.

Russian premier: Reforms will go ahead

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was quoted Tuesday as saying Russia's market reforms would not be altered after reformers suffered a rebuff in this month's parliamentary elections.

Anna Tyagunenko, press secretary to Economics Minister Yegor Gaidar, told Reuters that Mr. Chernomyrdin assured leaders of the Russia's Choice electoral bloc Monday "there could not be any talk about reconsideration of the reform course."

Speaking by telephone, she said these were the words used by Mr. Gaidar to quote Mr. Chernomyrdin when he summed up Monday's meeting. There was no immediate comment from Mr. Chernomyrdin himself.

Russia's Choice, led by Mr. Gaidar and other reformist ministers, failed to win a clear majority in the Dec. 12 elections and the new parliament will be roughly split equally between reformers, conservatives and ultra-nationalists.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, who stayed above the election fray, initially blamed Mr. Gaidar for the poor showing, saying his ill-considered rush towards a market economy had caused a protest vote.

Pretoria, ANC argue over police

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The ANC and the South African government, reacting to a series of attacks on policemen, blamed each other Tuesday for driving a wedge between the police force and the black majority community.

Four policemen have been killed in one township alone this month, bringing the total for South Africa this year to 250.

On Monday the police said they were suspending normal policing in the township, Alexandra north of Johannesburg, and police there would patrol only in armoured vehicles with the unpopular Internal Stability Unit (ISU).

The African National Congress condemned the latest killings of policemen but said the National Party government had contributed by making blacks distrust the police force.

"The government used the police to protect and defend the apartheid system... the ANC is not responsible for the

perceptions which the community have of the police... The police were viewed as a force to wage war against the people," ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa told Reuters.

"It is the responsibility of all political parties to help change that perception... and for the police to become more accountable to their communities," he added.

Law and Order Ministry spokesman Craig Kotze welcomed the condemnation of the killings but said the ANC itself was to blame for the escalating attacks on policemen.

"However welcome such a statement may be, the condemnation will be a case of too little too late unless the ANC immediately defuses the climate of hatred and aggression which it has itself unleashed against the South African police," he told reporters.

"The ANC should begin this process by at least giving a public guarantee that recent

statements such as that by (ANC Youth League leader) Peter Mokaba, that guns should be turned on police, will never again be uttered by ANC leaders or members, and that such statements do not represent the official policy of the ANC," Mr. Kotze added.

At a funeral last week for 10 township residents, Mokaba advised mourners to aim their weapons at policemen.

"You must direct your guns against the ISU rather than your own brothers," said Mr. Mokaba, who has been widely criticised in the past for chanting "kill the Boer, kill the farmer."

Mr. Mamoepa described Mr. Mokaba's remarks as unfortunate.

"It was an unfortunate statement which does not reflect our position or policy... This statement can only help fuel tension," Mr. Mamoepa said.

A national peace force grouping all of South Africa's armed formations could be on the ground in the townships,

10th Chinese plane hijacked to Taiwan

TAIPEI (R) — A Chinese couple, travelling with their six-year-old daughter, hijacked a Chinese airliner to Taiwan Tuesday and asked for asylum — the 10th such hijacking since April.

The couple, brandishing a fake bomb, forced a Fujian Airlines plane carrying 42 passengers and eight crew members to land at Taipei International Airport and surrendered to Taiwanese authorities, an airport spokesman said.

The propeller-driven, Chinese-built Yun-7 plane was on a domestic flight from the city of Ganzhou in southern China to the southeastern coastal city Xiamen when it was hijacked, he said.

As in previous incidents, the hijackers in Tuesday's incident would be detained in Taiwan for trial on air piracy charges. Interior Minister Wu Poh-Hsiung told reporters. Their daughter was also expected to stay on the island.

China has demanded the repatriation of the 12 Chinese asylum-seekers who hijacked planes to Taiwan in the pre-

vious nine incidents, and the issue has become a major source of tension between the two sides.

A third round of bilateral talks in Taipei last week failed to reach agreement on a pact under which Taiwan would send the hijackers back.

China, which has vowed since the end of the civil war in 1949, has refused to recognise Taiwan's jurisdiction over the hijackers.

Police identified the couple as Luo Changhua, 38, and his wife Wang Yuying, 34.

They were quoted by a government statement as saying they had come to Taiwan to "seek shelter because the Chinese Communists ignored the rule of law and demolished their home four months ago."

Luo carried a bottle containing batteries, a nail, a box of matches and wire, claiming it was a bomb. Wang handed a note to the pilot threatening to blow up the plane, police said.

Taiwanese state radio reported that another Chinese airliner on a domestic flight

veered towards Taiwan Tuesday in an apparent hijacking but then turned back towards China.

The report, which quoted unnamed sources, could not be immediately confirmed.

Taiwan has said it is willing in principle to send hijackers back to China to deter future incidents, but insists on reserving the right to exclude some of them if it determines they have valid political or religious motives.

China has accused Taiwan of indirectly encouraging the hijackings by failing to send suspects back immediately. Two hijackers have been sentenced to 10-year prison terms in Taiwan and the rest are awaiting trial.

Beijing said Monday that pilots would be instructed in new, tougher tactics to thwart hijackers, without giving details.

Last Thursday China sacked its civil aviation chief, Jiang Zhuping, at the end of a year which saw at least three air crashes as well as the hijackings.

Japan parliament ends year without fresh timetable

TOKYO (Agencies) — Japan's parliament ended the year in deadlock Tuesday, clouding prospects that Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa's package of political reforms can be enacted by a parliamentary session deadline in January.

Parliamentary officials said Mr. Hosokawa's coalition, which is staking its future on passing the reforms into law by the end of January, failed to agree with the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on when to resume sessions.

The coalition argued for parliamentary debate to open on Jan. 4, after a six-day break. The opposition LDP rejected the date, saying it wanted to take a recess until Jan. 9, inviting coalition accusations of delaying tactics.

The only fixed date so far is Jan. 4, when the coalition and the opposition meet to thrash out the parliamentary schedule.

Political reforms have been dominating parliamentary debate, postponing badly-needed

measures to boost the economy which is suffering the worst recession since World War II.

Last Friday Mr. Hosokawa said the annual budget, which would include such fiscal measures, will be drafted in mid-January.

He also apologised to the nation for not meeting his self-imposed year-end deadline to enact the political reforms, a pledge he made when he came to power in August.

The reforms, which include new electoral districts and strict measures to fight corruption, have languished in parliament for five years. Two successive LDP governments fell for not being able to act on the proposed reforms.

Mr. Hosokawa backed up his August promise by saying he would take political responsibility if he failed to keep it, meaning he would either step down or call snap elections.

He said the new deadline was Jan. 29, the end of the current 135-day session.

Meanwhile, talk of snap general elections was fire — a

last resort for Mr. Hosokawa should he fail to seal approval of the reforms by that date.

Many parliamentary aides said lawmakers were scurrying to their home districts to prepare for a possible election campaign. But the top government spokesman said those in the coalition parties should stop such talk.

"The economy is in at the very bottom and we just held elections half a year ago," Masayoshi Takemura told a convention of his party, the Harbinger New Party.

"It is highly improper of us to speak of (holding elections)," he said. "From the viewpoint of public opinion, we must avoid this at all cost."

Takashi Yonezawa, another leader of one of the parties in the eight-group coalition, also said snap elections would hurt the country.

"It is totally senseless to dissolve parliament when the economy is in such a serious state."

With a tough of caution, however, he added a custom-

ary phrase which says anything can happen in Japan's unpredictable politics: "It's pitch dark an inch ahead of your nose."

Meanwhile, the leader of the largest party in Japan's ruling coalition told its members Tuesday to be ready for a possible snap election to be called in January.

"General elections may be held next year," Tomiichi Murayama, chairman of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), told a party meeting, according to politicians present.

He was speculating on what Mr. Hosokawa might do if he failed to get his political reform bills approved before the present extended parliamentary session ends on Jan. 29.

Mr. Murayama said that a general election was undesirable at present in view of the urgent efforts needed to achieve economic recovery. But he said it was not possible to predict what action Mr. Hosokawa would take.

Beckenbauer to restore Bayern glory

MUNICH (R) — Germany's favourite soccer son Franz Beckenbauer took over Monday at Bayern Munich, the club he captained to three successive European Cup triumphs in the 1970s.

The way for the "Kaiser" to try to restore the glory days was cleared by the resignation earlier in the day of Bayern coach Erich Ribbeck.

Beckenbauer, the only man to win the World Cup as captain and coach, is expected to start his new job next week, but he may only stay until the end of the season, team sources said.

It is believed Bayern's first choice was Monaco's Arsene Wenger. Although he turned the Germans down, the club is still thought to be interested in him.

Ribbeck told a news conference Monday he had to take responsibility for the team's poor performance in this season's UEFA Cup when they were surprisingly beaten in the second round by England's Norwich City.

But he disputed any suggestion he was giving Beckenbauer a second-rate team.

"I'm not handing over a team of nobodies or a pile of rubble, as some people might think," he said.

"This is a complete team that's up there at the top. Unfortunately, I must say clearly — and this may in the end be the reason why I'm leaving — that it failed in the second round of the UEFA cup."

After a sticky period following the UEFA Cup disappointment, Bayern did well enough to stand third in the German League went into its winter break.

Bayern have won the Bundesliga a record 12 times. But their last championship was in 1990.

For a club which once dominated Europe, their inability to secure a place in the Champions' Cup in recent seasons has been immensely frustrating and the defeat by Nottingham Forest was a bitter blow.

As club vice-president, Beckenbauer will be aware of the problems facing him, but his pedigree is unquestioned.

As a player he won a record 103 caps for his country, captained West Germany to World Cup victory in 1974 and to the European title two years earlier.

In 1990 he coached the German team to their triumph in Italy.

At club level he steered Bayern Munich to three successive European Cup victories from 1974 to 1976 and won the World Club Cup, the European Cup Winners' Cup and eight domestic trophies.

He was West German Footballer of the Year a record four times and twice European Footballer of the Year.

After his World Cup success in 1980, Beckenbauer had a spell with Marseille, nominally as technical director but the arrangement only lasted a few months.



Paris-Dakar Rally sets off

PARIS — The Paris-Dakar Rally, which this time will finish back in the French capital, started Tuesday morning from under the Eiffel Tower. Two hundred and fifty nine teams — 96 cars, 96 motorcycles and 29 trucks — started the event. The first stage took the rally caravan to Bordeaux with the first four kilometre special section Tuesday afternoon in the Yonne region of central France. The 13,379 kilometre race finishes on the Champs Elysee on Jan. 16. The photograph shows French driver Pierre Charrasson at the wheel of his Toyota at the start of the rally (AFP photo).

Maguire collects 2-day ban after King George VI Chase victory

LONDON (Agencies) — Adrain Maguire landed his 100th winner of the season Monday, capturing the valuable King George VI Chase on 9-2 chance Barton Bank — and was promptly banned for two days.

While the huge holiday crowd thrilled to Maguire's latest exploits, the Kempton Park stewards took a less charitable view, banning the Irishman for excessive use of the whip.

French-trained favourite the Fellow, the mount of Adam Kondrat and winner of British Jumping's winter highlight for the last two years, finished third behind Bradbury Star, ridden by Declan Murphy.

Murphy, a compatriot of Maguire's, was also barred for two days for the same whip offence.

Bradbury Star (5-1) looked to have the measure of Barton Bank going to the last fence, but Maguire, riding at his best, conjured the last reserves out of Barton Bank to win by a head.

The Fellow, who started at 7-2, stayed on to take third prize money, 10 lengths behind Bradbury Star.

Both the winner and the runner-up were hard-driven from the last fence, but probably neither would have performed so well without the urgings of their riders and the aid of the whip.

The bans start on Jan. 5. As at Cheltenham two years

ago when he won the Gold Cup on Cool Ground, Maguire's uncompromising approach on the big occasion landed him with a ban.

Maguire was said to have struck Barton Bank 10 times and Murphy hit his horse seven. Stewards' Secretary Jeremy Ker said: "They were hitting their mounts with every stride and not giving them time to respond."

Under the rules, stewards can consider action against jockeys who hit their mounts more than five times after the last fence.

Maguire said: "We didn't abuse our horses but the stewards have a job to do."

Despite the ban, winning trainer David Nicholson warmly praised Maguire. He said: "I've been around racing since 1945 and he's the best I've seen. That's not an accolade, it's the truth."

"I left the tactics to adrian and he did everything right. I was lucky enough to win a Cheltenham God Cup (in 1988) with Charter Party but this horse means more to me and he could go to Cheltenham without another run."

The horse is now unbeaten in three races this season and is an 8-1 chance for the Gold Cup in March.

Young Hustler made the early running in Monday's three-mile (4.8 km) test. Barton Bank joined Young Hustler early on the first circuit

with the Fellow in close contention at the head of the 10-strong field.

Turning into the final straight, Bradbury Star loomed large with Murphy barely moving a muscle and Maguire hard at work.

At the second last fence there were five horses in line and none was going better than Bradbury Star.

But Maguire stoked up his mount in tremendous style on the run-in to hold off Bradbury Star as the pair drew clear from the Fellow.

Maguire said: "Barton Bank made a lot of mistakes, but I think it looks a lot worse than it feels."

Murphy said: "I thought I would win the whole way round but I was outstayed." Francois Doumen, the Fellow's trainer, believed that being sandwiched between Barton Bank and Bradbury Star two fences out cost his horse a winning chance.

In Wolverhampton, England, Petracco made British horse racing history Monday when the 5-year-old thoroughbred won the nation's first horse race held under floodlights.

Ridden by Steve Williams, Petracco won the 6-furlong (1 kilometre) flat race at a new £23 million all-weather Wolverhampton Circuit.

With 78 columns of lights around the circuit and some 10,000 fans watching, two floodlit races were staged.

Al Ahli poised to retake Jordan basketball title

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Fans and players will bid the 1993 basketball season farewell when the country's all-time rivals, Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxy, clash Wednesday for the Kingdom's most prestigious basketball title — the first division championship.

Titleholders Al Ahli, who now lead the standings after their 70-60 win over Al Orthodoxy in the first round final, seem eager and ready to continue their unbeaten streak and upset the former champions to retain the title they won in 1990 and 1992 after a decade-long reign by Al Orthodoxy.

According to the 1993 competition rules issued by the organisers — the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) — the top two teams will have to play a deciding round if they draw in the overall standings. Therefore, if Al Orthodoxy win Wednesday, fans will have to await a title-deciding best-of-three round.

However Al Ahli appear better prepared to upset their opponents and avoid a deciding round.

Besides the fact that they have an abundance of more experienced replacements on the bench, Al Ahli's Ukrainian coach has significantly altered their style which has proven to be successful when facing slower teams like Al Orthodoxy, who mainly depend on the seasoned yet individual efforts of the Barakat brothers.

During the past year, Al Ahli won six of 11 encounters with their all-time rivals:

- First round of '92 final (Ahli) 68-65
- Second round of '92 final (Orthodoxy) 84-81 in a controversial match which Al Ahli insist they had won before the match went into overtime.
- Ramadan Charity Match (Ahli) 82-78
- Al Maidan Tourney (Ahli) 90-71
- '92 title-deciding match (Ahli) 85-61
- Al Ahli tourney (Ahli) 60-59
- First round of '93 final (Ahli) 70-60

This year's competition, which began in August and was put on hold while the national team prepared for and competed in the Asian Championships, lacked the attendance and interest by fans who have had to follow up most teams' inconsistent results for over four months.

At the end of it all, Al Ahli held on to third place for the second year in a row while Al Ahli again finished fourth.

While Al Ahli scored a 91-79 victory over Al Ahli in the first round, they could only manage a 54-53 win in the second round. However, they still proved to be a team to be reckoned with and lost only to Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxy.

Meanwhile Al Watani, who had seemed vulnerable after their coach Ghaith Al Najjar walked out midway through the competition to join Al Orthodoxy, finished fifth and defied expectations by scoring an 80-78 win over Al Hussein in double overtime during the first round.

During the second round, Al Watani sought the expertise of Homentmen's coach and consolidated their position by upsetting Al Ahli 83-80 after overtime.

However, they later lost 85-40 to Al Hussein who nevertheless dropped to sixth place. Newcomers Al Ashrafieh and Al Wifaq had to be content with only one season among the top teams and were relegated to the second division.

According to JBF Vice President Samir Janakat, the number of teams in the first division is about to be lessened in an attempt to upgrade the competition among the country's best teams.

According to the 1993 competition regulations, only one team, Homentmen, will join the first division in 1994 in which seven teams will be competing. However, as of the upcoming season, two teams will be relegated in 1994 and one team will be promoted. Thus the first division will include only six teams instead of eight. The other teams will be competing in the second as well as third divisions.

With the completion of the first division championship, the JBF's 1993 activities will have been concluded except for the under-19 championship in which seven teams took part.

Al Jazireh led the standings at the end of the first round before the tourney was put on hold pending the end of the Tawjibi examinations.

Looking back at the past season, 1993 seemed to be a year of golden achievements for Al Jazireh whose junior teams overcame Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxy to win the U-14 and U-16 titles. Their women's team also ended Al Orthodoxy's undisputed reign to clinch the title for the first time.

In the second division, Homentmen overcame Al Abbasi to return to the first division, while Al Mafragh and Anjarah dropped to the third division.

The JBF abruptly cancelled the U-22 championship in which most teams were to have competed, drawing wide criticism from clubs and coaches who emphasised the importance of preparing a young national team and cited the latest disappointing results of the national team as a clear sign that the veterans had given it all they've got and that it was time to pass the torch.

The JBF's most pressing task for 1994 seems to be giving ample time and serious consideration for forming men's and women's national teams.

After months of preparation (which cost the JBF over JD 55,000), the national team's disappointing 10th place at the Asian championships led officials and experts who had predicted the team would at least play for 5-9th places to voice concern that the men's basketball team was on the wrong track and that cancelling the U-22 competition would hinder efforts to prepare a new national team made up of younger players that would serve the game and the country for years to come.

The women's team, which last represented Jordan in 1983, seemed to be indefinitely forgotten.

While the JBF named a new team in December 1992, all the regrouped players saw a meeting with JBF officials last April in which all players said they were ready to attend practice whenever it was decided. The JBF had then promised practice would begin in a week's time.

Therefore, 1994 might well be the year for a turning point in Jordanian basketball.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts
Ahli	13	13	—	1307	608	26
Orthodoxy	13	12	1	1297	756	25
Jazireh	14	10	4	1106	957	24
Jahil	14	7	7	1090	971	21
Watani	14	6	8	881	1069	20
Hussein	14	5	9	816	1045	19
Ashrafieh	14	2	12	689	1290	16
Wifaq	14	—	14	578	1270	14

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Sydney-Hobart fleet decimated by raging seas

SYDNEY (R) — An Australian skipper in the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race survived six hours in wild seas after being swept overboard by a huge wave.

Raging seas and gales have decimated the fleet, sinking two boats and forcing almost half the 105 Yachts to pull out of the race by late Tuesday, race officials said.

"We got hit by a huge freak wave," John Quinn, 49, said by radio from the yacht Atara in which he had rescued him.

"I was on the helm and got pitched across the boat. I probably took half the life lines with me. I certainly broke the safety harness I was on," he said.

Sailing in his 13th Sydney-Hobart Race, Quinn was washed off Mem at 11.00 p.m. (1200 GMT) Monday as the 10.8 metre yacht was battered by 11 metre (33 feet) seas and 40 knot gale force headwinds, race officials said.

Oil tanker Ampol Sorell was diverted to search for Quinn and eventually spotted the reflective tape on his lifejacket.

"He'd was a very lucky guy. If a wave picked him up and threw him against the side of the ship he would have been gone," said Ampol Sorell Captain Bernie Holmes.

Six hours later the dismasted yacht Atara, which had been heading back to Eden on the southern coast of New South Wales, picked up Quinn some 60 nautical miles off Eden.

The rest of Mem's crew, safe on board, had helped search for Quinn before leaving the race and motoring back to Eden.

"There are horrendous seas out there and very strong 45 knot winds. The rescue of a yachtsman from the sea at night is nothing short of a miracle," said Leigh Minehan, commodore of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, race organiser.

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Millions face World Cup 'sickness'

LONDON (R) — Millions of European soccer fans will get a dose of their favourite illness next summer — late night World Cup sickness.

Insomniac fans are going to need plenty of stamina, plus flasks of black coffee, to keep them going through the first eight days — or nights — of the tournament when there is a midnight or half-past midnight

Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) kick-off — every night.

A total of only 11 matches out of the 52 in the month-long competition will kick off so late for Europeans — but that still means millions of soccer fans across the continent from Dublin to Athens watching live action half the night of games taking place up to 11,000 kilometres away.

International Football Federation (FIFA) spokesman Guidotognoni said: "Only 11 of the 52 matches kicking off so late is not a bad ratio."

"Of course that might well mean millions of people going to work bleary-eyed the next day — but that is all part of the World Cup 'sickness' which fans love every four years."

"Oo a more serious note, both FIFA and the organisers are very pleased with the finalised kick-off times."

"Most of the matches will kick off early in the afternoon or evening and the American organisers have done as much as humanly possible to accommodate all the conflicting interests — the fans in the stadiums, European television and also other fans around the world in Africa and Asia."

"For fans in Asia the late

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WEST EAST
♠ 10 9 8 5 ♠ 10 9 8 5
♥ 4 3 2 ♥ 4 3 2
♦ 9 8 7 ♦ 9 8 7
♣ 5 4 ♣ 5 4

WEST EAST
♠ 7 6 3 2 ♠ A K Q
♥ 10 6 5 ♥ 7 8 2
♦ 5 ♦ A S A 4 2
♣ K 10 8 3 ♣ J 7 2

SOUTH
♠ 4 ♠ K Q J 9 8 7
♥ 4 ♥ K J 10
♦ A ♦ A 6

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♠

There's more to falsecarding than simply playing the card nearest your hand.

A thoughtful falsecard can be more revealing than playing an honest card. Look at this hand from a club game in Buffalo, N.Y.

Four hearts was the popular contract, usually reached via the direct route shown above. The universal lead was the singleton diamond, taken by East's ace. Invariably, declarer falsecarded with the king.

Most East's now cashed a spade. When West contributed the two, some Easts reverted to a diamond for West to ruff, but that was the third and last trick for the defense. Declarer's club loser eventually disappeared on the table's fourth diamond.

When James Mathis held the East cards, he saw at once that declarer's king could not be a true card. If it were, West had to have started with J 10 5 in diamonds and from that holding the lead would have been the jack. So Mathis returned the six of diamonds, a suit preference signal for spades. West ruffed, dutifully shifted to a spade and got another diamond ruff. That cut declarer off from dummy and the defenders eventually scored a club trick for down two.

The correct falsecard in the jack of diamonds, but even the ten would have left East with a problem. That would have meant the opening lead was either from K 10 5, likely, or K J 5, less probable. East would have to guess whether to continue with a diamond or try to cash whatever tricks in spades the defenders were due.

CONCORD

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CONCORD '2'
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 4:45, 6:30
Hi America Play, 8:30

PLAZA

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Malaysia not ready for links with Israel

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad said Tuesday that Kuala Lumpur would not establish diplomatic relations with Israel unless it declared a state for the Palestinian people. "Although there are Gulf states which have established diplomatic relations with Israel, we're not prepared because many things have yet to be done by Israel before we can accord it our recognition," Mr. Mahathir was quoted by the Bernama news agency as saying. He said that the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord in September was an "astounding development" but was not adequate because "there was no declaration on the part of Israel for a Palestinian state."

Jewish boy accused of killing Arab

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A 16-year-old Jewish settler was charged Tuesday with the murder of a Palestinian farmer shot dead while ploughing his field in the occupied West Bank, Israeli army radio said. It said police were holding the boy and two other Israelis from Shilo settlement in connection with the killing on Dec. 9 of Mohammad Abu Awad, 51, from nearby Turmus Ayya village. Police submitted an indictment against the boy in court accusing him of murder and asking that he remain in jail throughout the legal proceedings, the radio said. Police were considering charging the other settlers, aged 35 and 33.

Kuwait gives Iraqis 6 more days to leave

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has given Iraq an extra six days, until Dec. 31, to evacuate Iraqis who ended up living in Kuwait when the United Nations drew the border, a Foreign Ministry official said on Tuesday. The Iraqis began leaving in mid-December and Iraq had originally undertaken to evacuate them all by Dec. 25, said the official. "The United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) told us Iraq wanted to extend the deadline until the end of December 1993 and we accepted," he said. "They (the Iraqis) said residents of Umm Qasr (town) could not finish removing their belongings and they needed a few more days," the official added.

Sudan coup trial adjourned

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The trial of 29 Sudanese accused of plotting to overthrow the government of President Omar Hassan Al Bashir was adjourned Tuesday until Jan. 13 to allow the prosecution time to notify absentee defendants to return to Sudan. Seventeen of the 29 accused are abroad, mainly in Egypt, and failed to heed an earlier request by the attorney general to report to investigators for interrogation on the charges raised against them. The 12 defendants present for the trial were arrested earlier this year on charges of plotting to destroy strategic installations and assassinate prominent political figures to pave the way for an armed invasion by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army. The 17 absconced defendants include former Sudanese army Commander-in-Chief General Fathi Ahmad Ali and former security chief Brigadier Al Hadi Bashra, a leading figure in the Cairo-based Sudanese opposition.

Miniib proves Neanderthals had 'living spaces'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Researchers have authenticated what archaeologists have long believed: Cavemen divided their living areas into distinct areas of activity, a scientist said Monday. "They differentiated between cooking and living space and working space," said Stephen Weiner, a chemist at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot. He said the findings were based on the use of a portable laboratory used in a cave south of Haifa, where the skeleton of a Neanderthal man was found in 1983. Archaeologists have long believed that distinct piles of animal bones and ashes found at cave sites indicated differentiated activity spaces for the cavemen who lived between 100,000 and 40,000 years ago. Cooking, garbage dumps and living areas. Other scientists theorized that other bones were absent only because they had been dissolved by ground water. The Weizmann Institute developed a personal computer, software and a portable infrared spectrometer to analyse mineral deposits at cave sites. Their findings at Mt. Carmel showed that the theories of distinct bone piles were correct.

Kurd militants threaten travellers

BONN (R) — Militant Kurds Tuesday warned European tourists to stay out of Turkey or risk death in guerrilla attacks. Guerrillas fighting for Kurdish autonomy from Turkey would launch a campaign against tourism in the spring, Kani Yilmaz of the Kurdistan National Liberation Front (ERNK) told the German magazine Stern. "I warn all Europeans: Anybody who travels to Turkey puts his life at risk," Mr. Yilmaz said in an interview. "Every German mark that a tourist spends in Turkey means the death of one person in Kurdistan. That is why the tourism industry is a serious target for us."

Beirut gunman kills three brothers

BEIRUT (R) — A Lebanese man opened fire from a submachinegun on a family in Beirut's eastern sector Tuesday, killing three brothers before he was shot dead by a fourth brother, police said. Salim Ikhael Salameh burst into the home of the shehab family in Beirut's suburb of Sin Al Fil, killing the three and wounding their mother and fourth brother, they said. The fourth brother, Mohammad, opened fire from his pistol at the gunman killing him. Mohammad and his mother were taken to hospital. The motive behind the killings was not immediately known but an initial police report said Salameh was deranged.

Strike closes Cyprus airports

NICOSIA (AFP) — The Cypriot airports of Larnaca and Paphos were paralysed Tuesday by a public sector strike over wages, as banks also stayed closed in a Christmas dispute. The civil servants' union Pasidi called the 24-hour strike to demand five per cent increase for the 15,000 members, retroactive to 1992. The government has agreed on condition that salaries are frozen for the next three years, but Pasidi refuses. Banks were closed Monday and Tuesday because of a dispute with managers over holidays after Christmas fell on a weekend.

Kuwait appoints first woman ambassador

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait had named a woman ambassador for the first time in its history, officials here said Tuesday. Nabila Al Molla, sworn in Monday, was appointed ambassador to Zimbabwe. A graduate of the American University of Beirut, Ms. Molla joined the foreign ministry in 1968 and served for 10 years at the Kuwaiti mission to the United Nations in New York. Women do not have the vote in Kuwait.

One survivor in Armenian plane crash

MOSCOW (R) — A 23-year-old man was thrown clear and survived when an airliner crashed in western Armenia late Sunday in an accident in which at least 35 other people died, Russia's Interfax news agency reported Tuesday. News of the crash emerged on Monday but the Interfax report provided the first indication of a survivor. It quoted the head of an Armenian government investigation commission as saying the young man fell from the tail area of the AN-26 as it broke up on landing in thick fog at Gyumri near the border with Turkey. Commission Chairman Stepan Badalyan said the twin-prop aircraft's tail hit the ground first after it missed the runway of the airport. It then burst into flames. Mr. Badalyan said the airliner was loaded with a supply of fuel for its return trip as well as two cars which had full tanks of petrol and this had contributed to the inferno.



DEEP DUTCH WATERS: Frans Maassens (left) and an unidentified employee wade through high water in one of Maassens' Greenhouse Tuesday. Most of the damage to horticultural business caused by recent floods in the Limburg region will not be covered by insurance policies. The damage in the Netherlands is estimated at more than \$100 million (AFP photo)

Pilots' cunning scuppered Russian kidnap — agency

MOSCOW (R) — A \$10 million kidnapping in southern Russia was foiled by two army pilots who tricked the kidnappers into landing in the wrong place, Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said Tuesday.

The four gunmen had planned to land their commandeered helicopter in Khasavurt, near the border of the rebel province of Chechnya, where Russian security forces have no control.

But the pilots, who volunteered for the job after the gunmen took nine teenagers and four adults hostage, diverted in bad weather to Makhachkala on the Caspian Sea 80 kilometres away.

The kidnappers, who included a former Russian army flight navigator fired for drunkenness, failed to notice. They landed just outside the town in unfamiliar territory and were captured within a few hours on Monday.

Mr. Grachev told local news agencies the pilots — Lieutenant-Colonel Valentin Padalko, an Afghan war veteran, and Captain Vladimir Stepanov — had been recommended for top awards.

The 16 hostages, mainly Russian schoolchildren, had been released unharmed earlier in dribs and drabs during a four-day odyssey along the northern fringes of the Caucasus mountains.

Authorities said they had recovered virtually all the \$10 million ransom paid to the kidnappers, who were led by thrice-convicted criminal Arslan Kasimov.

The four gunmen were being held in solitary confinement in Makhachkala, capital of the semi-autonomous Republic of Dagestan. Interfax news agency

cy said they were due to be flown back to Rostov-on-Don near the Sea of Azov, where the drama began last Thursday morning.

Interfax quoted Mr. Grachev as saying that the plan was to make a dummy landing in Chechnya and then touch down in Khasavurt, where accomplices were waiting with a helicopter and a car.

The agency quoted Dagestan Interior Ministry officials as saying the chances of catching the gunmen would have been "minimal" if they had landed in Khasavurt, which is renowned as a den of thieves.

Chechnya has been at loggerheads with Moscow since declaring independence — so far without international recognition — in 1991 and Russia has no control over the local security forces.

Chechen leader Dzhokar Dudayev had promised to help capture the hijackers. But the wild terrain and the fiercely independent character of his people would have given the men on the run a good chance of escaping with their booty.

Mr. Kasimov, 47, told interrogators he had visited Khasavurt several times while planning the operation.

Interfax said three of the prisoners — Abdul Gafar Abdul Zhalimov, a 31-year-old Uzbek, Marat Kauzbekov, a 29-year-old Kazakh living in Uzbekistan, and the navigator, Anatoly Mikhayev, 44, from the Urals city of Sverdlovsk — had laid all the blame on Mr. Kasimov.

He himself had admitted everything, except Mr. Mikhayev's claim that some sort of organisation had been behind the operation.

Gamaa claims Cairo attack on tourist bus

CAIRO (Agencies) — One of Egypt's two main militant movements, Al Gamaa Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), said it carried out a bomb-and-gun attack on a tourist bus in which eight Austrians and eight Egyptians were injured.

The Egyptian semi-official newspaper Al-Ahram said the Gamaa had distributed a statement claiming responsibility.

The London-based Arabic newspaper Al-Hayat said it received a fax from the Gamaa saying it mounted Monday's attack "in revenge for the death sentences carried out recently on several members of the Gamaa."

Al-Ahram quoted a police source as saying investigators believed the same hit team shot dead a policeman at a Cairo cinema on Dec. 9 and a police intelligence colonel on Dec. 18.

The Gamaa, which has been waging a campaign of violence for two years to overthrow the government and turn Egypt into a strict Islamic state, claimed responsibility for both murders in faxes to news organisations.

Egyptian authorities have hanged 29 militants this year, the largest number of executions for political crimes in any year this century.

At least 10 were known to be members of the Gamaa, including a man hanged on Dec. 16 who the Gamaa said was plotting with army officers to kill President Hosni Mubarak.

The director of Qasr Al-Ain hospital, where the eight injured Austrians were taken after the bus attack, said three of them flew home on Monday night on a specially-equipped Austrian medical plane.

He said the two most seriously wounded remained in intensive care and had under-

gone several operations. One was a 25-year-old man who had a bullet in the brain and the other a 25-year-old woman injured in the leg.

The Interior Ministry said the attackers threw two bombs at the bus near an ancient mosque in old Cairo and fired shots from a nine-millimetre pistol. One bomb exploded outside the bus and the other inside.

Witnesses in Cairo said four militants on bicycles hurled a bomb and fired on the tour bus taking 19 Austrians around the historic sites of old Cairo, a poor coptic Christian district.

The attack was the first commando-style strike on foreigners in the Egyptian capital.

Similar attacks on foreigners have taken over the past three months in Algeria, where Islamic fundamentalists are in a state of virtual civil war with the authorities.

The Austrian ambassador in Cairo meanwhile issued a warning advising Austrians not to visit Cairo on the Nile Valley.

3 killed in hold-up

Three people were killed and three others wounded late Monday when gunmen burst into a jewellery store and opened fire, police said.

An unknown number of gunmen shot dead the owner, his brother and a third person thought to be a shopper, before fleeing with a large quantity of gold jewellery, said police.

Police sealed off the area after the attack in the working class Matariyah district.

In Assiut, two people were injured Monday when police tried unsuccessfully to arrest militants suspected of shooting dead four policemen, security sources said.

Arafat to meet reformist team

TUNIS (Agencies) — Senior Palestinian officials pressing for more democracy in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are due to meet PLO leader Yasser Arafat here next week, a Palestinian official said.

The delegation will consist of seven Palestinians from the occupied territories and the diaspora, led by Haidar Abdul Shafi, a founding member of the PLO and chief negotiator at the bilateral talks with Israel in Washington, said the official, who requested anonymity.

The PLO Executive Committee was handed a petition 10 days ago signed by 120 Palestinian political figures demanding democracy and respect for human rights within the PLO and in Palestinian institutions due to be set up in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

At least six of the 12 members of the PLO Executive Committee supported the petition, the source said.

He named them as Mahmoud Abbas, Suleiman Najjab, Jamal Surani, Yasser Amr, Samir Goshah and Yasser Abed Rabbo.

Mr. Arafat agreed to receive the delegation "under pressure," the official said.

Some members of the PLO leadership have also signed an internal memorandum criticising Mr. Arafat's grip on the PLO's apparatus and calling for more democracy in the organisation's affairs, another reliable source said.

On Monday, Mr. Arafat called on three youth leaders from his Fateh wing to reconsider their decision to quit, Palestinian sources said.

The three leading figures in the Palestinian intifada against the Israeli occupation resigned Sunday in protest at Mr. Arafat's decision to name a 13-member council to head Fateh operations in the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Arafat said the three "had no reason to resign" during a telephone conversation with Sami Abu Samhadana.

U.S. acknowledges Libya sanctions hole

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States Monday acknowledged that foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies may escape sanctions aimed at curbing business with Libya.

State Department spokesman David Johnson said that as a result, the administration has recently pressed U.S. allies to ensure enforcement in their countries of United Nations Security Council sanctions aimed at freezing certain Libyan assets and ban the sale of certain equipment to Libya.

Mr. Johnson was responding to a report in Monday's New York Times that said American corporations have used foreign subsidiaries to conduct business openly with Cuba and Libya.

He did not confirm the story directly but told reporters: "With certain exceptions such as Cuba, U.S. economic sanctions programmes as a rule do not seek to regulate activities by foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies."

He said this loophole was allowed "in order to avoid potentially serious conflicts of jurisdiction with our major trading partners."

Mr. Johnson, asked if the

head of Fateh's office in Gaza City and one of those who quit. The PLO leader said the resignations had stemmed from a misunderstanding and promised "serious changes will be carried out" in the Fateh leadership in Gaza in order to satisfy the three.

Fateh warning

Fateh has told Palestinian "criminal elements" in the Gaza Strip to stop a wave of impersonating political activists to extort money, a senior Fateh official in Gaza said Tuesday.

Soufyan Abu Ziedah said Fateh issued a statement warning impersonators would be punished because of a sharp rise in extortion by criminals claiming to belong to the Fateh Hawks in the impoverished strip.

Palestinians of the strip, due to be handed over to a Palestinian self-rule authority, say that if anything the area has become more anarchic since the PLO signed a peace agreement with Israel in September.

"Some criminal elements go to merchants and shopkeepers and say I'm from the (Fateh) Hawks, give me a thousand dinars or two thousand dinars," Mr. Abu Ziedah told Reuters.

"We issued the statement because there has been a rise in these crimes in the last two or three months," he added. He said those caught would be punished but did not give details.

The Palestinian Al Quds newspaper on Tuesday paraphrased the Fateh statement as saying those who continued this kind of activity could be shot if necessary.

"Everyone who does this is from the class of thieves and degenerates and must be crushed underfoot... whoever commits these excesses will have the sternest steps taken (against him) which could reach shooting him," the newspaper quoted the statement as saying.

Clinton's hunting angers animal rights group

TAYLORS ISLAND, MD (R) — Angering an animal rights group, President Bill Clinton went duck hunting Monday morning and reported shooting at just one duck. After two hours, Mr. Clinton, who advocates strong gun control measures, returned to a lodge on the Maryland coast in a helicopter. He said he believed that representative Bill Brewster, an Oklahoma Democrat, had killed the duck. "We both shot at it, but I think he killed it," the president said. In a letter delivered to the White House before he left, Mr. Clinton was criticised by the Fund for Animals Inc., an animal rights group. "Your decision to shoot, and possibly cripple, ducks for your mere amusement represents an obvious departure from your commitment to oppose gratuitous harm to animals," wrote Wayne Pacelle, national director of the organisation. In addition to Mr. Brewster, the president's hunting party included John Dingell, a Michigan Democrat, and an aide to Mr. Brewster.

"This is the first chance I have had to go bunting," Mr. Clinton said when asked by reporters before the excursion why he chose to brave the freezing temperatures just hours before heading to Arkansas for a holiday break with his family. Mr. Clinton, who has said he used to shoot with a .22-calibre rifle when he was a kid, borrowed a 12-gauge Winchester rifle from Mr. Brewster for Monday's hunt, an aide said.

Drummer, pianist and singer win jazz awards

WASHINGTON (R) — Drummer Louis Bellson, pianist Ahmad Jamal and singer Carmen McRae were named winners Monday of the Jazz Master Fellowships by the National Endowment for the Arts. The federal arts agency said the three jazz stars will be awarded \$20,000 fellowships in Boston on Jan. 14 by National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Alexander. The agency has been awarding the fellowships honouring stars of the American jazz world since 1982. The three new winners will join the ranks of such past recipients as Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Williams, Dorothy Donegan and Max Roach. The three new winners bring the total to 40 who have received the award for significant contributions to the American jazz art form.

Diana checks jeans, fingerle and perfume

WASHINGTON (R) — Britain's Princess Diana was in frigid Washington for a private visit and post-Christmas shopping tour Monday that included trying on blue jeans, sniffing expensive perfume and checking lingerie. The estranged wife of Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, was staying at the Brazilian embassy as the guest of friends, Ambassador Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima and his wife Lucia, during a private visit. The Princess, who recently announced she was curbing her official duties to lead a more private life, attracted crowds as she did some shopping in a Washington mall Monday. She loaded down her bodyguards with items in bags from several shops, according to the Washington Post, which reported that Princess Diana tried on size-6 blue jeans, sniffed some \$175 a-half-ounce perfume and browsed through some lingerie. The paper quoted Rebecca Siegel, 18, a Dartmouth College student working as a salesgirl during Christmas vacation, that she asked Princess Diana if she wanted some help as the princess went through a stack of blue jeans. "I was really nervous, but she was so nice," Siegel was quoted. "She wasn't at all pretentious."

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